LETTERS

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Monsieur de VOLTAIRE.

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AN APOLOGY FOR THEIR OWN PEOPLE,

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FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT:

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CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

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A SHORT COMMENTARY EXTRACTED FROM A GREATER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Translated by the Rev. PHILIP LEFANU, D.D.

VOLUME. II.

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DUBLIN:
WILLIAM WATSON,
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CETA VILLERANT

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GERMAN and POLISH SYNAGOGUE, with confpictmedates was bechaps you may be forry, that you have, without caule,

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laws, and those of the nations bignest in CONSIDERATIONS ON THE MOSAICK LE-GISLATION. moral laws.

LETTER I.

The Mofaick Laws, religious and moral, compared with those of other ancient nations,

There is one God, fays the Hebrew Code, and there is but one. This Con Lore de

UR Ritual Laws are not the only ones you have attacked in your works. Your cenfures extend to the whole body of the Mofaick legislation. and refer to a well another ofte to Voz. II. and who be better to food pet to the food of the Edit.

Let us therefore furvey the other parts of this code, which have had the misfortune of falling under your displeasure. A cursory view of it will fuffice to convince you, that the absurdity and barbarism you charge it with, proceed either from a total ignorance of it, or from the highest injustice. You will acknowledge that whether we confider their religious and moral laws, or their statutes civil, military and political, equity, humanity, wildom thines forth in them with conspicuous lustre. And perhaps you may be forry, that you have, without cause, been driven to fuch undeserved invectives. This effect will naturally be produced in a generous mind like yours, by the comparison which we are going to make between our laws, and those of the nations highest in fame. Let us begin by our (1) religious and moral laws. GISLATION.

LET.FERL

Religious and moral laws of the Jews.

There is one God, fays the Hebrew Code, and there is but one. This God alone deferves

you have attacked in your works. Your cen-

also religious and moral laws. The ritual laws are also religious laws; but these laws formed, as it were, the body of religion, those of which we are going to speak, are the soul of it. Edit.

ferves to be worshipped. He is the Supreme Being, the necessary origin of all beings, no other is comparable to him. He is a pure Spirit, immense and infinite, (1) no bodily shape can represent him. He created the universe by his power, he governs it by his wildom, and rules all its events by his providence. Nothing escapes his watchful eye, all good and evil proceed from his equitable hand, and as every thing comes from, fo every thing centers in him.

time and full into ideas, and which eminends

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B 2 Ministers

four and (1) with all the its

(1) No bodily Shape can represent bim. Even Pagans know that this was an opinion of the Jews. Tacitus. altho' in other respects their enemy, does them this justice. " The Jews," fays he, " worshipped but one God, " whom they conceived only in thought, a fovereign, " eternal, unchangeable God. They esteem those pro-" fane who employ perishable substances to reprees sent the divinity under a human form. For this rea-" fon they have no statues in their temples, nor even in their cities. They are strangers to this method of "flattering princes, and do not pay this compliment feven to our Cæsars." Judæi mente sola unumque numen intelligunt: prophanos qui Deûm imagines mortalibus materus in species bominum effingunt. Summum illud & eternum, neque mutabile, neque interiturum. Igitur nulla simulacbra urbibus suis, nedum templis sunt; non regibus bæc adulatio, non Cæfaribus bonor.

What shall we think of Mr. de Voltaire, who taking advantage of some metaphorical expressions of scripture. cooly affirms, that the fews believed God to be corporeal? Is this great man less acquainted with the Jews, or is he less equitable towards them than even Pagans? Aut.

to Thou feelt not evert. See Lynding, che 20. Ack.

Ministers of his service are appointed offerings and facrifices inflituted; but all this pomp is nothing in his eyes, if the fentiments of the heart do not give it life. The worship he requires before every thing, and above every thing, is the acknowledgement of our entire dependance and of his supreme dominion, thankfulness for his benefits, trust in his mercy, fear and love. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have none other Gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven images. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine beart, and with all thy foul, and (1) with all thy strength. These are true and fublime ideas, and which eminently diftinguish the Jewish from all ancient legiflators.

What purity and beauty in his morality! Is there a vice which it doth not feverely condemn? It is not sufficient that actions are forbidden, even desires are prohibited.

(2) Thou shalt not covet. He not only requires perfect equity, probity untainted, faithfulness, justice, the most exact honesty, but he would have us besides to be humane, compassionate, charitable, ready to do unto others what we could wish they would do unto

sale antage of fome metaphoneal expressions of scripture, good afferment that the Year believed God it believed to be antender

Deuteronomy, 5. Aut.

(2) Thou shalt not covet. See Exodus, ch. 20. Aut.

unto us, (1) Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. In short, whatever can make a man respectable in his own eyes, and dear to his fellow creatures, whatever can insure the peace and happiness of society, is there placed in the lift of duties.

Is it aftonishing then to hear Moses himfelf, struck with admiration at the excellence of these laws, breaking out in the following transport: And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgements so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?

ed its darkness and fre2. its uncortainties?

Comparison of these laws with those of ancient

Where could you find in all antiquity, fir, religious institutions more pure, and moral precepts more conformable to the seelings of nature, the light of reason, and the sacred rules of decency and virtue? Recal to your mind the laws of the most celebrated ancient nations: what salse and whimsical ideas of the divinity! What objects of worship! What extravagant, impure, cruel rites! What impious opinions, scandalous excesses, barbabarous customs, authorized or tolerated by B 3

(1) Thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c. Leviticus, ch. 19. Aut.

these boasted legislators! From the heavenly bodies which give us light, down to the plants which grow in our gardens; from the man celebrated for his talents or his crimes, down to the venomous reptile which (1) creeps under the grass, every thing had its worshippers. Here behold a facrifice of female modesty, there human blood flows upon the altars, and the dearest victims expire in those flames (2) which superstition has lighted up. A little farther violence is offered to nature by brutal love, and humanity debased by unworthy and barbarous treatment.

(1) Creeps under the grafs. Many writers, even among Heathens, have charged the Egyptians with worshiping plants and animals. Quis nescit, says Juvenal, qualia demens Egyptus portenta colat? &c. Others endeavour to justify them. They fay, that this was rather a civil and political practice, than a religious worship; fuch as the attention of the Dutch to preferve florks. which it is forbidden to kill in Holland under the severest penalties. This might be believed with respect to useful animals, but what political motive could engage the Egyptians to worship hurtful animals, such as Crocodiles, &c. We think this worthip very fimilar to that which the Africans pay at this time to their * Fetiches, and to proceed from the same superstition and folly. Upon the whole, even if the Egyptians were not charge-able with this, it is undoubted that many ancient nations had objects of worthip as ridiculous as those of the African negroes. We can produce the authority even of Mr. de Voltaire for this. Aut.

* Fetiche is a general term for the objects of worship

of the negroes on the coast of Guinea. Translator.

(2) Which superstition has lighted up. We intend to give proofs of all these facts in the sequel. Aut.

treatment. Every where the people live in shocking ignorance, and the philosophers (1) in error and uncertainty. Let us draw a veil over this mortifying picture of human blindness, which many others before us have traced out. But whilst we are turning our eyes from these dismal objects, permit us to ask you, why so many mistakes among nations so wise, and so much wisdom among the ignorant and barbarous Hebrews? Does it not proceed from this, that all other nations had only the weak and glimmering light of human reason for a guide, and that among the Hebrews a superior reason had enlightened its darkness and fixed its uncertainties?

the head of this povernment I fee

(1) In error and uncertainty. We doubt not but a body of wife maxims, and excellent moral precepts might be formed by putting together the best things, which the heathen legislators and philosophers have said. However it cannot be denied that these maxims and precepts are found in their writings accompanied with error and uncertainty, not only with regard to those great truths, which are the only folid basis of virtue, the existence of a God, his justice and providence, the liberty of man, &c. but even with regard to the most essential duties of morality. And it should not be matter of surprize. that the ancient philosophers, in the midst of heathen darkness, fell into these errors; when we see the moderns. altho' enlightened by the torch of revelation, calling in question, attacking these truths, and even whilst they are continually talking of morality and virtue, sapping their foundations. The pernicious opinions, the dangerous systems by which they have dazzled and discredited this age, are the most convincing proof that man wants another guide besides philosophy to lead him to virtue. Aut.

We shall insist no longer, fir, on our religious and moral laws: they are too well known, and their superiority over all ancient legislatures is too remarkable to require any further discussion.

fraced out. But whilft we are turning our cyrs from these drived objects, permit us to also year, whey so many mistakes among nation 23, mismor and some much wisdom among the important and burbarous Hebrews I Does it had only the weak and glimmering light of luminar reason for a guide, and that among the Hebrews a superior reason had enlightened its darkness and fixed its uncertainties?

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of wife maxims, and excellent moral precepts might be formed by putting together the belt thing; which the hearnen legislators and philosophers have faid. However it cannot be deried that these maxims and precepts are found in their writings accompanied with error and uncertainty, not only with regard to those great truths, which are the only fold basis of virtus, the existence of the only fold basis of virtus, the existence of the only in the providence, the subject of the constitution of the existence of the constitution of the only in the most of the providence, the subject of the only in the most of the providence, the subject of the only in the ancient philosophers, in the midst of heather that the ancient philosophers, in the midst of heather after enlightened by the torch of revelations, relies to all the continually talking of morality and even what it has are continually talking of morality and even what it has the foundations. The permittious reponds the damper of the age, are the most convening proof that max wents and the age, are the most convening proof that max wents and here gives besides philosophy to had max up to the

bas Of the political laws of Moses.

WE are not perfectly acquainted with these laws, sir, we confess it; but so much as the abridged recital of our history discovers to us, suffices to give us an high idea of the legislator, and of the plan of government he had formed.

his laws. He is a leader in ware arridge him neace. Death is the dealty for disobedience

Plan of government traced out by Moses.

At the head of this government I fee a Sovereign the most worthy of an entire obedience, it is that God who is the object of worship in it.

This God, master of the universe, but elected king of Israel by the unanimous and voluntary suffrages of a people, who owed to him their liberty and property, holds his court in the midst of them. The sons of Levi are his guards and officers; the tabernacle his palace. There he interprets his laws, issues his orders, and declares peace or war.

As supreme monarch, and at the same time, the object of worship, he unites at once civil

vil and religious authority. Thus the state and the church, so distinct elsewhere, here coalesce. These two powers, so far from clashing, mutually support each other, and the divine authority impresses a sacred character, even on the civil laws, and by consequence an influence which they never had in any other government.

Under Jehovah, a chief, his lieutenant and viceroy, governs the nation conformably to his laws. He is a leader in war, a judge in peace. Death is the penalty for disobedience (1) to his orders. Yet his authority is neither despotic nor arbitrary. A senate, formed of the most distinguished members of all the tribes, is appointed (2) for his council. He advises with them in matters of importance, and if there are national concerns to be discussed, the whole congregation, that is, (3) the assembly of the people, or to speak according to

(1) To bis orders. See Joshua, chap. 1. verses 16, 17, &c. Sut.

elected king of Higel by the unanimous and

(3) The affembly of the people. These affemblies, under Moses, when the Hebrews formed a body of troops,

⁽²⁾ For bis council. See Numbers, chap. 11, ver. 17. ch. 32, v. 1, and 2. Joshua, ch. 19, v. 15. ch. 17, v. 7. ch. 22, v. 13, and 14. The authority of judge among the Hebrews was pretty nearly equal to that of the consuls at Rome, the kings at Lacedemon, the suffectes at Carthage. Governments which were not by any means barbarous. Aut.

to the moderns, the *states* are convoked, matters are laid before them, they determine, the chief executes.

The same order subsists in the different tribes. Each has its prince, its senate, its heads of families. Under these latter were the heads of those branches which sprang from them, and under them the leaders of thousands, hundreds, (1) sisties, tens, &c. each of them invested, according to his place, with civil and military power.

By these wise regulations a powerful militia, quickly raised, marches under its leader as one man; justice is administered, good order is maintained, subjects are kept within bounds, the authority of their superiors is confined within just limits, all parts of the government (2) support and balance each other

bore some resemblance to the assemblies of the Greeks, described in the Isiad, and to the assemblies of the people at Athens, Lacedemon and Rome. It is probable that some time after, they were composed only of the deputies, and representatives of the people, as the house of commons of England, and the states of Holland are, &c. Edit.

(1) Of fifties, tens, &c. See Deuteronomy, ch. 16.

v. 18. Aut.

(2) Support and balance each other. In this government no man could have fortune or power sufficient to usurp sovereign authority, and to make attempts against public liberty. Besides, in such an attempt, the judge would

other, and a bleffed harmony prevails thro'the state. Is this, sir, a plan of government worthy only of an absurd and barbarous legislator.

The fame order fubfiffs in the different tribes. Each has its femote, its femate, its

Precautions taken to maintain union among

Division among the tribes could alone defiroy this harmony, and therefore the wisest precautions are taken by the legislator to keep them ever closely united.

Already a community of origin and of blood united them; these ties are still faster bound by religion, they have the same God, the same worship, the same ministers of worship, one altar, one temple, and they are bound to resort to it from all quarters.

Even this is not fufficient, the tribe of Levi fcattered amongst the others, without

demailes, and repor lantatives of the people, as the house

would have been stopt by the princes of the tribes, and these, by the judge and heads of families, &c. The priests and Levites, whom the dignity of their office, and their superior knowledge might have raised above the others, were rendered dependant on them, because they possessed no lands, &c. The more we restect on this form of government, the more we shall find it wisely calculated for the support of common liberty. Edit.

being particularly attached to any one of them, announces the same doctrine, and teaches the same law. And if, to shorten the length, and lessen the costs of suits, each tribe, (1) each city, has its judges for expediting private affairs, where the sense of the law is clear, there is besides a supreme tribunal appointed to determine (2) nice questions, and the disputes between tribe and tribe. This national court decides without appeal, and as its jurisdiction extends to all parts of the state, it maintains union amongst them, as well as justice and order.

For this purpose were those severe laws enacted against foreign worship, against those cities or tribes which should revolt or separate. You censured the severity of those laws, merely because you did not know (3) the political reasons of them.

We

(1) Each city bas its judges. See Deuteronomy, ch. 16. v. 18. Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, &c. Aut.

(3) The political reasons of them. It cannot be denied

⁽²⁾ Nice questions. See Deuteronomy, ch. 17. v. 8, and 9. If there arise a matter too bard for thee in judgment, then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days. And thou shalt do according to the sentence which they of that place shall shew thee. And the man that will not bearken unto the priest or unto the judge, even that man shall die, &c. Aut.

We request you will answer us this question, Have the present governments, which most nearly resemble that of Moses, known how to place such powerful bonds of union between the parts which compose them?

law is clear, there is reddes a funceme tribu-

How dear this government must have been to the people.

If the great art of the legislator is to attach the subject to the form of government which he establishes, what form in the world could have more charms for the Hebrews than this? No other ever came nearer to the appointment of nature. It was the authority of the father of a family over his children,

that besides the zeal for religion and justice, this political object was one of the motives of that feverity, which was intended against the tribes beyond Jordan, and which was put in practice against the Benjamites, the Ephramites, &c. Perhaps passion had its share, but the bent of the law was not less wife. The more union was neceffary among the 'libes, the more feverely a spirit of division was to be punished. This observation alone shews how vain and ill-placed are the illustrious author's declamations, upon these two facts, against the want of toleration for foreign worship. Is he fo little acquainted with our history, as not to have made this reflection? And will he henceforward think that there is much reason for his jest, that the Ephramites were flaughtered because they could not pronounce the word Schibolet ? Aut. tied for the lapport of will

dren, that of the children over the grand-children, that of the grand-children over the great grand-children, &c. All of these kept up in some degree their rights of nature, and these respectable and darling rights were transferred from elder to elder, down to the most distant generations.

In this domestick and family-government, if we may use these expressions, places of power and authority were not titles to plunder, or revenue employments; every thing was free. Therefore but light tributes were exacted, which were appointed by law, and the uses they were applied to, softened the rigour of exactions. Some of these taxes were appointed (1) to help the indigent, and (2) to keep up public worship; others allotted to the ministers of this worship, as a just recompence for their services, and as a proper indemnification for their not having had any share (3) in the distribution of lands.

§ 4. Wif-

(2) To keep up publick worsbip. Every Israelite paid an-

nually to the fanctuary half a shekel. Aut.

⁽¹⁾ To belp the indigent. Such was the tithe of the third year, it was given in particular to the poor. When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase, the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the satherless and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates and be filled. Deuteronomy, ch. 26. v. 12. Aut.

⁽³⁾ In the distribution of lands. The Almighty said to Aaron,

dren, that of the children over the grandchildren, that of the 4:30 dechildren over the great grand-children, occ. will of them kept

Wisdom of these laws in the distribution of lands.

The distribution of lands has been looked upon by all ancient nations as a master-piece in politicks. Where were they more wisely distributed than (1) in our legislature? The institutions of the samous Spartan legislator, so much extolled by the Greek writers, must yield the palm, in this respect, to the Jewish legislator. In the distribution appointed by this great man, every one out of six hundred thousand soldiers, introduced into the land of Canaan, was to get a portion of ground sufficient to maintain him and his family in decent affluence. Moses is not satisfied with insuring

Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land. I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance. Numbers, ch. 18. v. 20, and 21. It is very remarkable that Moses, who was of the tribe of Levi, gave no lands to the priests or Levites. This piece of policy was in direct opposition to that of Egypt, where the priests possessed for much land free of taxes, Aut.

(1) In our legislature. And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families, and to the more ye shall give more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give less inheritance. Every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth. Numbers, ch. 33. v. 54. Aut.

by the laws of men, as other legislators did, he confecrates it by religion. According to these principles, Jehovah is the only Lord in the land which (1) he gives to the Hebrews. They are all his vassals, and their lands are so many fiess which they hold immediately from God, and from him only. To seize these lands or disposses the tenants, would have been an act of high treason.

But these siefs are not granted to them without conditions of service. One of the principle of these is military service. (2) On this condition merely they possess them. By this means the state was always supplied with a militia of six hundred thousand men, made up not of adventurers, pressed into the service, or drawn into it thro want or libertinism, but of citizens, who, besides their liberties and lives, had (3) a good property to Vol. II. A volume in C. The second seco

be abfolutely (2) unalienable. They were

105

⁽t) He gives to the Hebrews. For the land is mine, fays the Lord, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me, that is vassals, copy-holders, to whom I grant part of my domains. See Leviticus, ch. 35, v. 23. Aut.

⁽²⁾ On this condition. See Lowman. Aut.

⁽³⁾ A good property. If Moses's plan had been executed, every one of the fix hundred thousand Israelites, capable of bearing arms, would have had, upon a medium, about twenty two acres of land, abstracting more than three millions nine hundred thousand acres, which were

defend; these forces were sufficient to resist, not only the small nations in the neighbourhood, but even the powerful empires of Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, especially in a country which was on all sides difficult of access and many and has also as well access and many and has also as well access and many and has also as well access.

Altho! this plan of government appears abfurd to you, yet the wife and learned Chancellor Bacon, whose political knowledge, we may suppose, was as great as yours, (1) found it admirable.

to many fiers which they hold inhibediately

without conditions of fervice. One of the principle of thele is will ary fervice. (2) On this condition merely they possess them. By

Wisdom of that law which made their lands

It is not sufficient to have formed this noble plan. In order to render it permanent, the legislator declares that these lands, and the farms necessary for their improvement, shall be absolutely (2) unalienable. They were

were reserved for publick uses. For according to this present computation, the land promised to the Israelites was to contain sourceen millions nine hundred and sixty thousand acres. See the differentiation of the learned Lowman on the civil polity of the Hebrews. Aut.

(1) Found it admirable. See his History of Henry VII.

(2) Unalienable. The land shall not be fold for ever, for

given to the fathers, and must pass to the children, and remain for ever in the same tribes and families. This law was the effect of deep and wise policy. It perpetuated all the advantages of the first distribution, and by confining the citizen to his original spot, it kept up in him the love of industry and frugality. It repressed avarice, it prevented the ambitious schemes of great land-holders, and the oppression of the poor, jealousies, discontent, factions, and all those evils which other commonwealths vainly endeavoured to remedy by their Agrarian laws.

This, fir, is a flight sketch of Moses's plan of government. Even by this poor description, consider whether you have justly given the epithet of absurd to our political laws, and whether our misfortunes are not rather ow-

C 2 military land towing

for the land is mine, faith the Lord. Leviticus, ch. 25, v. 23. We shall observe here, that the houses in cities might be alienated. If they were not redeemed within the year they remained the property of the purchaser. This difference between property in city and country, is entirely in favour of agriculture, and is sufficient to shew the esteem which the legislator had for it, an esteem which he wanted to impress on the Hebrews too. The products of agriculture are the only things of true value. Every wise government will deem them such, and will endeavour to multiply land-holders. Aut.

ing to our infringement of those laws than to their pretended abfurdity. This law was the effect

rolling bus social

A little equity would rather incline you. instead of censuring our political laws, to admire fo wife a form of government, founded in so remote antiquity! out mid ai que read it

firm day. He repressed avarious in provented the ambitions feli. 2%, are 9Wt and-holders,

and the oppression of the book enlousies. different elections, and all thoic evils which other commonwealths vainly endeavoured to remedy by their Agrarian laws.

This, fir, is a flight fleetch of Mofes's plan of governments. Live arby this poor defendtion, confider whether you have juffly given the epithet of ablind to our political laws, and whether our mislomanes are not rather owand the contract to appear the contract of he legislater decisive that their lands and the

farms needfary for their improvement; that

for the land is mine, fairly the Lords Leviller, ch. 25. vi and We thall observe here, that the house in cities might be slienated. If they were not redeemed within Ary a Ley remained the property of the purchaser. This difference hetween property injerty and country, is conficient favour of agriculture, and is fallerent to the we the effect which the localistar had for its an effecting which in wanted to impress on the Hebrews more Than products of eggiculture are the only things of arms, when lucivi. Every wife government will deem them fuch, end will endeavour to multiply land-holders. And. (12) the houself. The land final test by file for over,

but planed a consyard, and but not yet eden of it & And War Roll of To T B Ut hereashed a wife, and but not token her? Let him en

Of the military laws of the Jews.

OUR military laws, fir, are chiefly the objects of your cenfure. They appear to you inhuman, barbarous; and we are not furprized at it, because you judge of them according to your prejudices, and the customs of your own country; but consider them impartially, and you will observe in them a tenderness towards the citizen, and even towards the enemy, which other nations were strangers to in those ancient times, and which modern nations have not always imitated.

of they returned will sings in neder to

Tenderness of the Jewish military laws towards

By these laws, as well as by those of all nations at that time, every citizen able to bear arms was a soldier. But the Jewish government paid an indulgent and wise regard to the tenderness of the citizen for objects naturally dear to all men, and ordered, that when the troops were assembled, the leaders should make the following declaration, What man is there that bath built a new bouse, and bath not dedicated it? And what man is be that hath

bath planted a vineyard, and bath not yet eaten of it? And what man is he that bath betrothed a wife, and bath not taken her? Let him go and return unto his bouse, least he die in battle. Deuteronomy, ch. 20, v. 5.

They also permitted those that were fearful and faint-hearted to retire (1) before the engagement. This was also a wise institution. By this condescension to these weak men, they were prevented from disheartening their Brethren, and it taught the combatants to conside less in their numbers than their valour, and in the protection of the Lord of Hosts, of which they had experienced so many fortunate instances.

If they returned victorious, in order to bring them back to more tender feelings, after the rage of battle, the law ordered that they should consider themselves as polluted by this, perhaps necessary, slaughter, and unworthy of thus appearing in the camp of the Almighty; they were therefore to employ an whole day in purifying themselves before they went into it in a language themselves before they went into it in a language themselves before

doucally dear to all men, and ordered, that

⁽¹⁾ Before the engagement. Those who thus retired before the engagement, were employed in the service of the combatants. They were ordered to repair the roads, and carry the baggage, &c. &c. Edit.

Such, fir, were the dispositions of this barbarous legislature towards the citizen.

But even then the lay prohibited all that unacceffary waste and haveek, which are an-

Military laws of the Jews concerning the enemy. The order for demanding satisfaction before a declaration of war. Probibitions against unnecessary waste.

Let us now confider the regulations appointed with regard to the enemy. We shall not speak here of the wars of the Lord against proscribed nations; this was an exception to our military laws, of which, perhaps, we may say something hereaster. We confine ourselves at present to the wars of the nation against other nations. In these, our government ordered us to act with such moderation, as would certainly have struck you, if before you criticized our laws, you had taken the pains to read them earefully.

In the first place, the law forbad us to undertake any war thro' caprice, ambition, or spirit of conquest, as so many kings and nations have done, those illustrious robbers, renowned in your histories. We were allowed to take up arms only to defend ourselves against unjust invasions, or to procure satisfaction for wrongs that had been done, and

stances of it.

ow Product but is wife it. Denterosomy, chr inc.

we were not permitted to enter the enemy's country until fatisfaction had been refused.

But even then the law prohibited all that unnecessary waste and havock, which are authorised by the laws of war (1) among other nations; it forbad us to cut down fruit trees, or to fell even those which did not bear fruit, except where there was an absolute necessity. Are the trees, the law says, enemies which can fight against you, so that you must cut them down? These surely, sir, are not harbarous rules and ordinances. We think they might excite a blush in the nations, which are now most famed for politeness and humanity.

confine ourselves at present to the wars of the mation against other & done ... In these, our

-our foul dier be or in hospito hismanovog

The Jewish legislature went still a step farther than this first instance of humanity. Even when after a victory an enemy's city was besieged, the law obliged us to (2) proclaim peace unto it. If they accepted it before

nowifed in your hiftonies. We were allowed

(2) Proclaim peace unto it. Deuteronomy, ch. 20.

Aut.

⁽¹⁾ Among other nations. Even those who suffered this waste, rather looked upon it as a missfortune than a piece of injustice, Uri segetes, dirui tetta (says Livy) misera magis quam indigna. Aut.

fore the affault and opened their gates, the only punishment to be inflicted on them was, that they should become tributaries unto us and (1) ferve us. CHARLE HOWA-BOOK LINEATY STEEL ROCKESS

But if they refused an accommodation, and perfifted in a defence, then the law permitted us to take the place by affault. And in order to punish them for their obstinate resistance in risquing to bring upon themselves all the horrors of war, and to shew an example to intimidate others, the law gave them up to our discretion. Thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword; observe this expression, (2) every male thereof, that is all those who bear arms, for then every man was a foldier. This is the fense of (3) the original. And take notice too, that this is a permission granted and not an order given, for we were allowed to make prisoners.

(1) Serve us. Ibidem. Aut.
(2) Every male thereof. See ibidem. Aut.
(3) The original. Josephus understands it in the same fense of those who bore arms and made resistance, उप्रद वरगामकावनवर्द्दवादश्यदः

Ancient nations generally killed on those occasions all the males of the age of fourteen, and the Romans particularly gave inflances of this feverity against such cities as made an obstinate defence. Cædes, says Livy, speaking of Tarentum, tota urbe passim facta; nec ulli puberum qui obvius fuit, parcebatur. But they pushed this cruelty fometimes farther. We shall produce some in-Clances of it. Aut.

The object therefore of this statute, was not to oblige us to kill all those who bore arms, but to prevent us from killing any others. In those times, most nations, in the heat of the assault, and even after it, massacred every one they met with, without distinction of age or sex. But our law forbad us to kill any except those who bore arms. It ordered us, even in these moments of tumult and carnage, to spare women and children, because as they could neither make nor advise war, it deemed them worthy of being treated with less rigour.

Thus, this statute, which you think fo barbarous, had no other view than to repress those cruelties which were then practifed, and to confine us within the bounds of that severity which is unfortunately necessary on those occasions, a severity which is practifed among the most politic nations.

\$ 4.

Treatment of prisoners of war.

This is not all, sir; observe with what caution the law orders the Hebrew soldier to treat his prisoners of war; it does not abandon them to the insolence and brutality of the conqueror. If thou seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto ber.

ber, that thou wouldst have ber to thy wife, then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and she shall shave ber bead, and pare ber nails. And the shall put the raiment of her captivity from off ber, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail ber father and ber mother a full month, and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be ber busband, and she shall be thy wife. " This " is an admirable statute, says Philo. On one " hand, instead of tolerating that licentious-" ness which custom, and the laws of other " nations authorized, it kept the foldier, dur-" ing thirty days, in constraint, and as it shew-" ed him his captive, during this interval, in " an undress, and stripped of all those orna-" ments which might add to her charms, it " gave him time and opportunity to mode-" rate the violence of his passion. On the " other hand, this law was a balm to the " forrows of the captive. If she was a maiden " fhe must have been distressed that she could " not be married according to her heart's de-" fire, and with the confent of her parents. " If the was a widow, the must have been " afflicted too for the loss of her first hus-" band, and for being obliged to take up with " an imperious mafter in the person of her "(1) fecond." who made allowed transfer the condition tuBut, and atterwards fold them, or married them is

⁽¹⁾ Second. Therefore, according to the learned Jew of Alexandria, the law did not allow the first familiarities of the soldier with his captive. He was obliged to marry bendam. W. E. F.

But, the Law goes on, if it shall be that thou have no delight in her, then thou (balt let ber go whither she will, but thou shalt not fell ber at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandize of ber, because thou hast (1) humbled ber. This was a just penalty for the inconstancy of the victorious soldier, and a kind reparation to the unfortunate woman, for the abasement which she had endured in the house of a stranger, and also for the affront of seeing herfelf cast off by him, at the very time fhe might have expected to become his wife. We know, fir, that some heathen commanders have been immortalized for their continence on fuch occasions, but produce any ancient nation, whose government treated prisoners of war with so much tenderness and respect as ours.

5. Laws

marry her. This is also the opinion of the Talmudists of Jerusalem, of Josephus, Abravanel, &c. Aut.

1) Humbled her. See Deuteron. ch. 21, v. 10. That is, according to Abravanel, because you have cast her off, after having confined her to severe trials, during a month. But even if we were to understand by this word the victor's enjoyment of his captive, yet this law would still be more favourable to her than those of most other nations, who were allowed every familiarity with their captives, and afterwards sold them, or married them to their slaves. See the complaints of Polixena in Euripides, and those of Andromache in Virgil.

Stirpis Acbillae fastus juvenemque superbum

Servitio enixæ tulimus, qui deinde

- me famulam famuloque Heleno transmist babendam. Edit.

hope for who elegaed from the iddier weary of carnage, Thus Stion was treated by O-

Laws of war more gentle among the Hebrews, than among any other ancient nations.

percy who was 'en a philotopher too. 'Now

Such are those military laws, fir, which you declare to be detestably cruel. They are in truth fo many lessons of humanity fitted to these barbarous times, so many commands given to our fathers to abstain from those shocking practices, which all nations then indulged themselves in, and which in later times, the most polished people, Persians, Greeks, Romans, &c. under kings, and commanders the most famed for gentleness and benevolence, practifed. Yes, fir, even when nations became more civilized, and manners more gentle, the vanquished had (1) no law to mitigate the severities of war. According to the general opinion, their property, their liberty, their lives, every thing was at the mercy of the victor. This was the right of war acknowledged by all nations; and often the incensed conqueror executed this barbarous law to the utmost rigour. He plundered and flaughtered every thing without regard of age or fex; flavery was the happiest lot which those unfortunate persons could And somiton & sund same hope is imply the military laws of the Priffins, Greeks,

⁽¹⁾ No law to mitigate. It was the general maxim, Lex sulla victo parcit Senec. Trag. Aut.

hope for, who escaped from the soldier weary of carnage. Thus Sidon was treated by Ochus, Tyre by Alexander, the towns (1) of the Marsi by Germanicus, Jerusalem by Titus, Majozamalcha and Dacires by an emperor who was (2) a philosopher too. Now, fir, exalt the apostate christian, and censure the Jewish legislator. Accuse his military laws of cruelty and barbarity, whilft they are incharamos your of some are diffutably even to our fathers to abliain from their

(1) Of the Marfi. Tacitus informs us of this. fexus, he fays, non atas miserationem attulit. See Annals, lib. 1. ch. 31. Josephus uses almost the fame words, speaking of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. This general, of so gentle a character, caused a great number of Jews to be flaughtered there who furrendered at discretion. Two thousand prisoners of war were hanged by his orders, and two thousand more exposed to wild beafts, or forced to kill one another in the shews which he gave at Cefarea and Beritus. Aut.

(2) A philosopher too. When Majozamalcha was taken by Julian, every thing in it was flaughtered without distinction of age or fex; Sine Sexus discrimine vel etatis quidquid impetus reperit, potestas iratorum absumpsit. This great and populous city was utterly destroyed. Ampla & populosa civitas in pulverem concidit & ruinas.

Dacires was treated in the fame manner. When Julian's army found it abandoned by the inhabitants, it was plundered. The women that were left were flaughtered. and the city was destroyed to such a degree, that those who would have feen the place on which it stood, would never bave thought that there had been a city there. See Ammianus Marcellinus & Zosimus. Aut.

Thus truly the military laws of the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, &c. were gentle, and those of the Jews barbarous. 12 Edit. all near it ntagitim of well off (1)

Lex willa ville percit Schee, Traces Aut

disputably more gentle, than those of any ancient or modern nation that has not yet been enlightened by revelation.

You will perhaps fay, that the Hebrews did not always observe that moderation which was enjoined them. If some of them deviated from it without lawful reasons, and superior orders, we give them up to you. But be candid, fir, censure the transgression, and accuse not those laws which condemn it.

do 6 6. lay Loo much when

A false charge of the celebrated writer confuted.

Judge now, fir, with what equity you have faid, that it was our custom to kill all males in cities taken by assault; and again, that we were always commanded to kill all, except marriageable women. Is it not clear that this is a gross calumny against our laws, or an evident proof, before all the earth, that you never read them.

A charge so false, so clearly confuted by the very text of these laws, whether it be voluntary and intended, or only the effect of haste and prejudice, must hurt your works. It is proper to expunge it out of your new edition. forme of themedovi-

edition. We request it of you, less on our own account than on yours. If, after having shewn you so evidently the falsity of it, it be found again in your works, what opinion will the world entertain of your justice and impartiality? In sant ovioldo exawly son was enjoined them. If

We are most respectfully, &c.

protocorders, we give them up to your a But be caudid, fir, cenfure the transportion, and accuse not those laws which condemn it.

A fulle charge of the celebrated coving con-

fairly that it was our cuflom to hill all males in cities taken by affailt; and again, that we were abways commonded to kill all, except marriagenthe comment is it not clear that this is a großcalkmay against our laws, or an evident proof, before all the earth, that you never

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inn's acres lound is absorbed by the infraints L E T-A charge to falle, to clearly confuted by the very text of their laws, whether it be voluntary and intended, or only the effect of hafte and prejudice, must have your works. It is proper to expanse it out of your new edition

cultivated abole lands, which were originally given by CVI 18 17 T B. Then were

handed down from father to ion, ever fince Of the civil laws of the Hebrews

pafs to his most distant postcutty. We where

INDER the name of civil laws we comprehend all those, whose object it is to maintain among the individuals of the state, security, plenty, honesty, justice, and en hogourable profession among our fissasq

We think we do not fay too much when we affirm, that the Mofaick legislature is inferior in this respect to none other, ancient or modern; and that if it is compared with the most famous legislatures, it will not lose by the parallel. A full detail of this would lead us too far, we shall confine ourfelves to fome capital points. Moff ancient marions lad tengious alv-

lums, from whence tele greatest criminals

Comparison of some of the civil laws of the Hebrews, with some parallel laws of ancient nations.

amage splishes The Spartops for inflance, did Agriculture is the parent of plenty, the basis and support of states. No laws ever tied down the citizen to his ground, by more powerful bonds than ours. With what pleafure and fatisfaction must the Hebrew have You Il To receive any, See Josephus against Appion Ver cultivated those lands, which were originally given by God to his ancestors, then were handed down from father to son, ever since the origin of this government, and were to pass to his most distant posterity.

For this reason, the cultivation of land, which was despised, being looked on as a service occupation, and given up to slaves by so (1) many nations, was always accounted an honourable profession among our fathers. This is one of the objects on which the legislator has entered into the greatest (2) detail.

What great uprightness our legislature required in our judges! Rome permitted hers to receive small presents, Munuscula. "Our "law," says Josephus, "forbids them under pain of death, to receive (3) any."

Most ancient nations had religious asylums, from whence the greatest criminals could not be dragged; "and these asylums," says the celebrated writer of the spirit of laws,

(1) So many nations. The Spartans for instance, did not cultivate their lands, this was the business of the Helotes. Edit.

(2) Into the greatest detail. Hence so many laws to prevent waste in the country, to preserve and increase such animals as were useful for cultivating land, but especially the strong preserve given to property in the country, to that in cities. Aut.

(3) To receive any. See Josephus against Appion. Edit.

laws, "increased so much, especially in "Greece, that magistrates sound it difficult "to execute justice." Moses appointed but one of these, and it was for man-slaughter. He that smiteth a man so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand, then I will appoint thee a place whether he shall slee. But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile, (1) thou shalt take him from mine altar that he may die. And none of the ransoms authorised by other legislators for this crime, could be taken (2) in ours.

Dig and pristley of the Dig and reas near too Wife

(1) Thou shalt take from mine altar. See Exodus, ch. 21. v. 12. "The laws of Moses, with regard to asylums, were very wise. Those who had committed
man-slaughter were innocent, but it was proper to
take them from before the relations of the deceased,
He therefore appointed an asylum for them. Those
who had committed great crimes deserved no asylum,
and they got none. The Jews had but one tabernacle, and one temple, the vast concourse of men-killers,
coming from every quarter, might have disturbed
divine service. If they had been driven out of the
country, it was to be feared that they would worship
strange Gods. For these reasons, cities of asylums
were established." See spirit of laws, Vol. II. Aut.

(2) In ours. These kinds of ransoms were used amongst all ancient nations. They were authorised by the laws of all the northern nations, Germans, Franks, Lombards, &c. The murder of a man was bought off for a few crowns. This barbarous custom is not yet abolished among certain christian nations; there are

what

Wise institutions secured the honour of our wives, and the modesty of our daughters. Compare these institutions with the (1) nakedness, the lending, the promiscuous use of women established by certain legislators.

Compare our marriage laws with those of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, &c. which permitted not only cousin-germans to marry, (3) but the uncle the niece, the brother the sister,

yet, that some, where a rich man, for a small sum, may kill a poor man with impunity. Mr. de Voltaire has very justly exclaimed against this shocking remainder of barbarism. We delight in doing him this piece of justice. It must be allowed that this great writer has often past just censures, and given useful advice to the age he lives in. Edit.

(1) The nakedness of women, &c. At Lacedemon, on certain days of the year, it was usual for young persons of both sexes, to exercise and dance together naked. The laws of Sparta, says Montesquieu, not only deprived parents of all natural feelings, but also, stripped chastity of modesty. Aut.

(2) The lending, &c. The laws of Sparta allowed it. It was also practiced in the other Grecian common wealths. There were examples of it even in Rome.

Edit.

(3) The uncle with the niece, &c. The emperor Claudius was the first Roman who married his niece. Marriages between brothers and sisters were common in Egypt and Persia, they were so even among the Greeks; the Romans, and almost all the western nations, abhorred them with good reason. These marriages could not fail to introduce many irregularities in families. See what

fifter, the father and daughter, and even (1) the mother and the fon, and tell us on which fide flood decency and wife policy. and season from the southwest all when

You accuse our government of barbarity. But if the time and space allotted to a letter would admit it, we could readily fet the gentleness and equity of our laws in opposition to the justice and cruelty of parallel laws of ancient nations. To the land to the sail of the

come daries medical streets of dage doct one reflored every filted D 3 1 to the pr

Thefe fentinents were net confined to the eves by biring every other perfourmight

what bishop Taylor says on this. It belongs to found policy to prevent these irregularities, and to extend as far as the frame of government will permit, the connections and motives of attachment between fellow-citizens.

For these reasons the Jewish lawgiver prohibited such marriages. His laws with regard to this are clear. See Leviticus, ch. 18. Moses there expressly forbids father and daughter to marry, fon and mother, father in law and daughter in law, fon in law and mother in law, brother and fifter of same father and mother, or of same father only, or of fame mother only, and whether they were legitimate or illegitimate; the marriages also between grand-father and grand-daughter, nephew and aunt, brother in law and fister in law are forbidden. These laws flowed from wisdom and decency, and befides it is physically useful, and of great advantage to population, to traverse lineage and mix blood. Edit.

(1) The mother with the son. The ancient Persians, Arabians, Cananeans, Egyptians, &c. have been cenfured for fuch incestuous marriages. But the whole restern world always abhorred them. Edit.

Toddily of any or of the second conservations

In this legislature, there were none of those (1) hereditary professions, none of those blemishing distinctions of Castes, established among the Egyptians and Brachmans none of those outrageous contempts of one order for the other, which caused seditions for a long time in the Roman common-wealth. Every thing here recalled to the minds of the Hebrews that original equality, and those fraternal feelings, which their common descent from one stock ought to inspire them with.

These sentiments were not confined to the Jews by birth; every other person might share in them. It was a fixed law amongst us, to admit into our religion and our common-wealth all those who, by submitting to the rite of circumcision, would admit (2) our laws and customs. This was a more humane law certainly, and savoured more of true policy,

(1) Hereditary professions. No one can dispute that these hereditary professions, these distinctions of Castes, &c. slowed from bad policy. They could only serve to damp emulation and genius, and to propagate among fellow-citizens hatred and baleful jealousies. Edit.

and filleren farne father and mother, or diffaire

⁽²⁾ Our laws and customs. The law is clear. The stranger who shall circumcife the sless of his foreskin, with all the males of his family, shall eat the passover with you, and shall be as one born among st you. Thus Achior, because he believed greatly in God, and circumcised the sless of his foreskin, was joined unto the bouse of Israel unto this day. Judith, ch. 14. v. 6. Aut.

licy, than that odious exclusion of strangers, ordained by fo (1) many other legislators.

Review all the laws of ancient nations, what can you find in them, that equals the tender care of the Jewish law-giver, for the orphan, the widow, the poor, and (2) all the diffressed? Or that equals the humanity of these two institutions of the seventh year, which fet the citizens at liberty who had become flaves, and of the Jubilee year, which restored every fiftieth year to the proprietors, their lands and houses that had been (3) alienated Post of its object bastonite (1) fity not voluptuouinets. The laws of decency are thought of the law of the U.C. and thust be felt by all

beganished CAdd of the law which protects the medelf

(1) Other legislators. Lycurgus amongst others, excluded all strangers from his common-wealth. They were not even permitted to tarry long at Lacedemon, and the Lacedemonians were not allowed to travel This is the observation of Josephus against Appion, Lib. 2. No. 28. Plato produces the fame

charge against the Spartan law-givers. Aut.

(2) All the distressed. In the Mosaick legislature there are found many laws in favour of the poor, and prefling exhortations to relieve all those who are in want. Other law-givers produce nothing comparable to this. When we reflect on all these laws and exhortations, in which the law-giver's humanity is to strongly marked, can one bear patiently to hear this great man and his whole plan of government, branded with the names of ferocity and barbarity, by a celebrated writer who calls himself impartial? Edit.

(3) Alienated. Besides the tendency to humanity, these two institutions had a very wife political object; the one prevented the number of citizens from decrea-

Almost all ancient governments abandoned, without reserve, the slaves of both sexes to the lust and brutality (1) of their masters. You cannot be ignorant (2) to what excesses this permission

fing and perishing, to the loss of the publick, in the state of slavery; the other restored them to the privileges and offices of a citizen. See Deuteronomy, chap. 13.

Levincus, ch. 25. Edit.

(r) Of their masters. "I do not think," says Montesquieu, "that the policy of the Romans was good in this respect. They gave a loose to the incontinence of masters. (the same may be said of almost all anciment nations.) Slavery has for its object," he adds, "utimity, not voluptuousness. The laws of decency are sounded on the law of nature, and must be felt by all nations. And if the law which protects the modesty of slaves is valid even in arbitrary governments, where absolute power reigns, how much more in others!" This licentiousness was the bane of morals among ancient nations. What could unfortunate slaves do against voluptuous imperious masters, who were restrained by no laws? Edit.

(2) To what excesses. Excesses of incontinence which are attested by all the ancient writers. Read only Anacreon and Horace, and see to what excesses the Greeks and Romans went in this respect. Even Cato, the wise Cato, carried on a scandalous trade with his beautiful slaves whom he prostituted. There were also excesses of cruelty without bounds. It makes one tremble to read over the Roman laws respecting slaves. They compare them to beasts of burthen, and give them up to the most cruel tortures. Did the master of a family happen to be assassingly all those that were found under the same roof, or even within the sound of the voice, were condemned to die without distinction. These laws are the work of ferocity, and the scandal of reason. And can any one prefer such government to ours? Aut.

41

permission gave birth, even amongst nations that are often proposed to us as models of wise government. It was reckoned moderation to give up guilty slaves only to cruel punishments, even the innocent were not always spared.

"(1) At Lacedemon, let slaves be treated in whatsoever manner, they could not claim the protection of the laws. They were obliged every year to receive a certain number of stripes, altho' they had not deferved them, merely less they should forget the duty of obedience. If any one of them looked above his condition, by an elegant figure, he was condemned to die, and his master was fined, in order that he might by severity prevent his other slaves from offending hereafter the eyes of the citizens by their outward accomplishments."

The Spartans, authorized by these laws, used to fall upon the Helotes, whilst they were employed in the works of husbandry, and without mercy would destroy the ablest men amongst

of the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres, and is written by Mr. Capperonier. This learned Academician feems to think that the Cryptia was not authorized by their laws. But altho' it may not have been authorized, yet it appears at least that it was tolerated by them. Edit.

amongst them, for no other reason but for exercise, and least these slaves should increase too much.

Rome, more barbarous still, saw her great men slaughtering their slaves, without cause of complaint, in order to throw their bodies into their sish-ponds, to make their lampreys, by such nourishment, more delicious. Even under the eyes of the magistrates, thousands of these unhappy creatures expired in the amphitheatre, for the amusement of a cruel people; and some festival-days caused more human blood to flow in the empire than many days of battle.

Our laws did not give to masters this tyrannical power. They watched over the lives and modesty of slaves. They ordained that if the master, when he struck the slave, put out his eye or broke his tooth, he should (1) send him home free. When they deserved death, the judges were to pronounce the sentence, and if any man, chastized by his master with a stick, died in the act, the master (2) was condemned to die, except he shewed clearly that he had no design to kill him; and

(1) Send bim bome free. Exodus, ch. 21. v. 26, 27.
(2) Was condemned to die. See Exodus, ch. 21. v. 22.
The text fays, be shall be furely punished. By this the Jewish doctors understand the punishment of death. Aut.

and he was not secure from prosecution, except the slave survived the correction (1) for some days. For this reason our fathers were almost (2) the only ancient people among whom there never were any of those rebellions of slaves, which brought so many other states to the (3) brink of ruin.

We might say much more of the wise limitations (4) of paternal authority among the Hebrews,

(1) For fome days. The legislator justly supposed that the double apprehension, first, of exposing himself to a prosecution, and then of losing his money, would be sufficient to keep the passion and violence of masters in proper bounds. Therefore the author of the spirit of laws very unjustly cries out, with regard to this law, What a nation this, in which the civil law was obliged to abate of the law of nature. He should rather have taid, what nations the Spartans, Romans, Sicilians! What nations all the ancient nations! What laws in comparison of those of the Hebrews! These latter put a double restraint on the master, the former none at all. Edit.

(2) The only ancient people. We share this glory with the Athenians, that is, with that ancient people who, of all others, treated their slaves with the greatest gentleness. Edit.

(3) Brink of ruin. The dangers which the Spartans, Sicilians and Romans incurred from their rebellions flaves are well known. Modern nations have been frequently exposed to the fame dangers. Aut.

(4) Of paternal authority. A woman with child, if she had killed her offspring, a father if he had exposed his new-born infant, would have been condemned as murderers and enemies to that state which they deprived of a citizen. See Josephus and Philo. Even Tacitus

Hebrews, and of the barbarous liberty which the laws gave to the Greeks and Romans, to bring up or to expose their new born infants, and even to kill them of whatever age; of the cruelty of the ancient Roman laws (1) towards women, and of the equity of ours in this

has observed that it was deemed criminal in a Jew to kill any of his children, Necare quenquam ex gnatis nefas. When parents had a wicked incorrigible child, they were obliged to complain to the judges, who ordered him to

be put to death. See Deuteronomy, ch. 25.

Heathen nations held other maxims. The custom of exposing or killing new-born infants, which is still common in China and Japan, was universal among the most civilized ancient nations. At Sparta they never brought any children up, who happened to be mishapen, or of a delicate constitution. The tribunal appointed for this enquiry ordered them to be immediately thrown into a pit. The ancient Roman laws went still farther; they gave fathers the absolute right of life and death over their children. Endo liberis justis jus vitæ, necis, venum-dandique potestas ei (patri) esto. They might even sell them three times. This power lasted during their whole life, and ended only with the third fale. Si pater filium ter venumduit filius a patre liber efto. Therefore the Roman laws gave a man greater power over his fon than over his flave; this is the observation of an ancient writer, Data patri, majore potestate in filium quam domino in fervum. And Aristotle has maintained that the power of a father of a family over his flaves and his children was fo absolute, that he could not possibly do them any injustice. This is noble morality from the prince of philosophers! See Grotius. Edit.

(1) Towards women. By these laws, a woman convicted of having drank wine, was sentenced to die. A husband who wanted to put his wife legally to death in

this respect; of the moderation which was enjoined us (1) towards our debtors, and of the horrid law of the twelve tables, which allowed the creditors to (2) load the debtors

So far was our los flature for

this case and in that of adultery, needed not to appeal to courts of justice; a meeting of some relations was a sufficient authority. If she was taken in adultery, he might kill her without any form of law, whilft the law gave the woman no power to obtain fatisfaction for her husband's irregularities. In adulterio uxorem tuam fi deprebendisses impune necares, says Cato, illa te, si adulterares, digito contingere non auderet. Plutarch thought these laws cruel, but they were conformable to the laws established by Romulus, who made the condition of the Roman women a kind of flavery. Add to this that the husband might put away his wife for having taken his

keys. Aut.
(1) Towards our debtors. The following laws must be added to that which ordered us to forgive the debts due to us every seventh year. Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy poor brother, and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need. Beware that there be not a wicked thought in thine beart, faying, the year of release is at band. When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into bis bouse to fetch bis pledge, thou shalt stand abroad and the man shall bring it. No man shall take the nether or the upper mill-flone to pledge, for be taketh a man's life to pledge. In any case thou shalt deliver bim the pledge again when the fun goeth down, that he may fleep in his own raiment and bless thee, and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God. Deteronomy, ch. 15, and 24. &c. &c.

(2) Load the debtors with chains. The law permitted the use of chains of fifteen pounds weight; it prohibited any weight above this. Vincito aut nervo aut compe-

receiving of this Roman laws then two Romans who

might be expected to understand it well. East,

with chains, and after some market-days, to cut them in pieces, and (1) to share amongst them their bloody limbs, or to fell them to allowed the cieditors to (a) had the walls

So far was our legislature from commanding, or permitting us to be cruel towards our fellow-creatures, that it orders us every where If the was taken in adulter

Kill her window inv Removed Live visite the law

dibus quindecim pondo nec majore. And no one has cried out, What a nation these Romans, who were forbidden by law to crush their debtors under the weight of chains ! Aut.

We must observe here that this law was one of those emacted by the Decemvirs, partly with a view to mitigate the ancient laws against debtors. We may judge from this how severe they must have been. Under the protection of these laws, creditors treated their debtors with fuch barbarity, that these cruelties at last excited a general rebellion of all the Plebeians against the great. See Livy, Decad Ist. This Historian relates there one fact of the highest cruelty. Let Mr. de Voltaire compare these laws with ours, and decide. Edit.

(1) To share among st them their bloody limbs. These are the words of the law, if our memory does not fail us. Ast si plures erunt rei, tertiis nundinis, partis secanto. Si plus minusve secuerunt, se fraude esto; se volent uls Tibe-

our authors take this law in the same sense that Aulus Gellius and Quintilian do. Tertullian understood it so too. Two moderns, Mr. Binkershock, a Dutchman, and Mr. Taylor, an Englishman, have maintained that this law only permitted the creditors to divide amongst them the property, not the limbs of the debtor. We wish for the honour of the twelve tables, that these two modern and learned strangers may have better understood the meaning of this Roman law, than two Romans who might be expected to understand it well. Edit.

to treat even cattle with humanity. Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. (1) Thou shalt not take the dam with the young. Thou shalt not kill the young one under the eye of his dam. Thou shalt not kill the animal that is pursued which taketh refuge, like a suppliant, in thine bouse, &c. Yes, fir, the more we fludy our laws, the more inflances we find in them of gentleness and humanity, and the more they are compared with ancient legislatures, the more a man will be convinced of their excellence, vorsdrad has swell describe

are dark laby inties in which your most learns dain's and has way 200 and another to

voice general downers can increal them, a Civil laws of the Jews compared with those of some modern nations.

The fame laves and flatules But let us drop antiquity. Do you think that your modern legislatures have wifer inflitutions than ours? We do not prefume here to censure the laws of those nations which tolerate us. No, fo much affurance would ill become our unhappy fituation. It will be fufficient to shew you, en passant, that the Jewish legislature, which has no charms for you, is at least free from those defects which you have so often charged on your modern legislatures, ow is senter I and made to the work and in bilatery ignormal has not very contract. We have not

lang he fayes but we have fix or fired thousand with

⁽¹⁾ Thou shalt not take the dam with the young. See Deuteron. ch. 23. &c. roof circumfiances. Edic.

In the first place we have a code; we had it above three thousand years ago; and you have often said, that your polite nations have none. They have this favour still (1) to expect from their sovereigns.

Our code is short and clear; kings can read it, and nations understand it. Your code of laws, we speak your own sentiments, are after so many years labour, nothing more than undigested compilations, consused heaps of foreign laws and barbarous customs; they are dark labyrinths, in which your most learned counsellors lose their way, and thro' which your greatest lawyers can searcely shew a path.

The fame laws and statutes ruled all the tribes; Juda had none others than those of Ephraim, and the tribe of Manasses the same as that of Benjamin. But among you, "Every town, every hamlet has its own laws. What " is just in one village is unjust two miles farther, and you change laws as often as you "change post-horses."

Out

⁽¹⁾ To expect from their sovereigns. Two great kings have lately deserved the thanks of their subjects for having given them codes. But France, if we are to believe le Philosophe ignorant, has not yet got one. We have no laws, he says, but we have fix or seven thousand volumes on the laws. See the supplement to le Philosophe ignorant.

Our laws were uniform and invariable.

"There is no stability in yours. They change
"like the dresses of men and women. You
"have not any fixed laws (1) even in crimi"nal cases."

You censure the diversity of weights and measures in use in your provinces. In ours, the same weights and measures were every where in use, as well as the same laws.

Your clergy, an order however useful and respectable, even in a political light, is often the subject of your (2) invectives. You upbraid them with their celibacy, and their great possessions. Ours had no land, and besides gave children to the state.

Our judges were the elders of our cities; they performed the duties of their offices without fee or reward. And you inform us that your judges, almost as soon as they leave Vol. II. E school,

(1) Even in criminal cases. See the supplement to le

Philosophe ignorant, &c. Aut.

(2) Investives. Mr. de Voltaire after other writers, and other writers after Mr. de Voltaire, have often raised their voices against the great property of the christian clergy. But what would these gentlemen have? Would they have the clergy have no property, not even any thing to live on? This would be somewhat hard. Do they think them too rich? We can affirm that we have often seen, and not without pain, very useful clergy, in poor circumstances. Edit.

school, sit in the fanctuary of justice, and there give sentence on the life and honour of a citizen; that their decrees must be paid for, and that they themselves give large sums for (1) the right of pronouncing them.

You could wish that in your country trials in capital cases were (2) publick; in our government, every one was present at such trials, and sometimes the people executed the sentence.

Year eleter in a deleter Y

When you consider that your laws inflict on a citizen not yet convicted, a punishment more dreadful than that death which he suffers after certainty of his guilt, you shudder at the thought, and your (3) tender heart recoils. Look into the laws of Moses, you will find that this barbarous custom of the rack, which you abhor, was never known in them.

(2) Publick. See the comment on the Treatife of Crimes and Punishments, and the Philosophical Dictionary Article, of the best legislation. Aut.

(3) Tender beart recoils. See ibidem, and the supplement to le Philosophe ignorant, &c. &c.

⁽¹⁾ The right of pronouncing them. See especially the Philosoph. Diction. Article Montesquieu. Mr. de Voltaire there calls the venality of judges's offices, that noble traffick of law, which the French only, of all nations on earth, are acquainted with. "These men," he says, speaking of his countrymen, "must be the greatest traders in the world, fince they buy and sell even the right of judging men." Aut.

(1) No Jewish woman, curious to pry into such matters, ever asked her husband at his return from court, My dear, did you put those men to the rack?

Your legislatures seem to you (2) extremely fevere in the punishments which they inflict on criminals. You think that those lingering deaths in cruel torments, favour much of the barbarous manners of your ancestors. In our legislature, punishments were sometimes severe, but the kind of death inflicted was never far fetched.

You do not approve that death should be inflicted by your laws for felony, the punishment you think (3) too great for the crime; our laws punished it only by restitution, fine, or flavery.

If a stranger sojourn with you, says Moses, in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you, shall be unto

(1) No Tewish woman. We request our readers to recollect that all these criticisms on modern legislatures are not ours, but belong to Mr. de Voltaire. Aut.

(2) Extremely severe. See comment on the Treatise

of Crimes and Punishments.

(3) Too great for the crime. See ibidem. A wife young prince, the king of Denmark, has lately ordered this crime no longer to be punished by death throughout his dominions. Edit.

you as one born among you. And thou shalt love him as thyself, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (1) The Lord loveth the stranger. Are not these laws kinder, sir, than your (2) droit d'Aubaine?

Moles says, If a man smite the eye of his servant or the eye of his maid, and if he smite out his man-servant's tooth or his maid-servant's tooth, he shall let them (3) go free for the sake of the eye or the tooth. You, gentle and humane nations, say to your negroes, "that they " are men like you, redeemed with the blood " of that God, who died for them as well as " for you. And after this you make them " work like beasts of burthen, you feed them " ill, and if they attempt to run away, you " cut off one of their legs, and you oblige " them to turn a sugar-mill, after giving them " a wooden one."

Our

(1) The Lord loveth the firanger. See Deuteron. ch.

22. Levit. 19. Exodus 22, 23, &c. Aut.

auger foieurn with you, five Mofes,

(3) Go free. Exodus, ch. 21. We exhort our readers to compare our laws respecting flavery with the black code, and then to tell us in which of them they find the

most humanity. Aut.

⁽²⁾ Droit d'Aubaine. This is a kind of escheatage, The right of succession in the estate of an alien, dying without naturalization and French born issue. Sovereigns are insensibly abolishing it. A more wise policy has opened their eyes to their true interests. Edit.

Our code says, there shall be (1) no where of the daughters of Israel, all your cities are full of them; and if we are to believe your wife men, there ought to be publick endowments for them, and their calling ought to be held honourable.

It says, be that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy members cut off, shall not enter into the (2) congregation of the Lord. And Philo affirms that death was the punishment appointed for thus mutilating a man. But you mutilate your children to make (3) musicians of them for the pope's chapel, and you have been some and be also and post the pope's chapel, and you

(1) No whore in Ifrael. See Leviticus, ch. 19. Deuteron. ch. 23. v. 17. See also Josephus and Philo. Aut.

The words of this law fignify literally, there shall be no consecrated man or woman; whence some commentators conclude, that it alludes to those infamous persons of both sexes, who attended in the temples of Baal-peor, Moloch, Priapus, and Venus, and there publickly devoted themselves to prostitution. This was an abominable custom which the laws tolerated, the pagan religion consecrated, and which the holy legislator forbad his people. They reckoned two thousand such consecrated women in the single temple of Venus at Corinth, all supported at the expence of the temple. Edit.

(2) Congregation of the Lord. See Leviticus, ch. 22.

(3) Musicians for the pope's chapel. With what view does the learned christian here attack the head of the christian religion in particular? Is it for the pope only, or for all the princes and operas of Europe, that they make eunuchs in Italy? We must be more equitable than him.

post up in your towns advertisements informing the publick, where the (1) best operators in this way may be found.

You laugh at the particulars, into which Moses enters for keeping wholesome air in our camps and cities, and cleanliness about our houses and persons; at the ablutions he prescribes after having touched dead bodies; at the attention he recommends to us to cover the blood of slaughtered animals, &c. Tis true your laws lay no such troublesome observances on you. No, but the most publick places in your capitals present us with a shocking spectacle of the carcases of animals cut up; (2) the blood flows from street to street,

him, and confess that we have been affured at Rome, that many popes have prohibited this barbarous custom, by their bulls, under pain of excommunication. The wise pontiff now on the throne has renewed the same prohibitions. Edit.

19. See allo folephus and Pader date

(1) Best operators in this way, &c. Not long ago, says Mr. de Voltaire, the following words were written in large characters at Naples, over the doors of some barbers, Qui si castrano maravigliosamente i puti. See the comment on crimes and punishments. Aut.

(2) The blood flows from freet to fireet. This speciacle could not fail to offend strangers, who are accustomed to the neatness of the markets in Holland. It is hard to conceive, that in some cities it never came into any man's mind, if not to give the blood of slaughter-houses a free passage by subterraneous canals, yet at least to bring the sewers near the slaughter-houses, or the slaughter-houses near the sewers. Edit.

freet, and the dead infect the living even in (1) your temples.

A contagious distemper raged in Palestine and the neighbourhood; the wise precautions of our legislator prevented its communication; and your fathers by observing these, at last kept off (2) this scourge. A still more destructive contagion mows down the flower of your youth, and you have no other secret for curing it, but to give it to yourselves, and your only method of preserving yourselves from it is (3) to spread it.

proferrings, the efficacy of which is full (a) felt among us, to the vain declarations of

(1) In your temples. We are affured that the civil power has often endeavoured to correct this abuse, against which Mr. de Voltaire more than once cried out. A corpse in a Jewish temple would have been a profanation. There were but two sepulchres in Jerusalem, that of David and that of Olda. In ancient Rome there was but one, which is still seen there. The Roman laws forbad burying or burning the dead in the city. Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito, neve urito. Aut.

government, their legislator enacted laws against the leprofy. For more than two centuries the great and small pox have laid Europe waste, and the nations have not yet got any laws on subjects so important. Edit.

(3) To spread it. Mr. de Voltaire claims the honour of being the first who spoke of inoculation in France. Other persons of some understanding, affirm that an eminent physician brought it to light before his time. Let this be as it will, it is not by any means our intent to condemn it. We think on the contrary, that as the practice

Your politicians begin at last to see that the true strength of the state confists in the multitude of people. Moses knew this thirty centuries before them. No legislator ever knew how to incite his people more frongly to population. According to the spirit of this government, celibacy is (a misfortune, barrenness a scandal, and a multitude of children the bleffing of the Lord. There, every thing favours the instinct of nature, the great command of the creator for the Meffiah is expected, luxury is forbidden, debauchery and all enticements to it (1) are proscribed. Dare you compare these power-ful springs, the efficacy of which is still (2) felt amongst us, to the vain declamations of ruox In your temples. We are affired that the civil

practice is tolerated, it is too little used and with too little precaution. We would however give the preference to Mr. Paulet's preservative method, which is the same as that of Moses against the leprofy. We are informed that an eminent physician is preparing to strengthen it by new proofs and experiments. Aut.

has often endeavoured to correct this abuse,

(1) Are proferibed. Mr. de Montesquieu observes, that fornication contributes little to population, and that in-

continence in general is the hane of it. Edit.

(2) Felt amongst us. Tacitus makes the same observation of the laws in his time; augenda multitudini confulitur, says this historian. These, according to him, were two features in their characters, the desire of having children, and the contempt of death. Animus aternas putant; bine generandi amor & moriendi contemptus. See the history of Tacitus, lib. 5. The Roman laws which offered exemptions and privileges for the encouragement of matrimony, and penalties against the single state, had

your politicians, which are contradicted by their examples? And indeed these declamations produce noble effects! We will respect your religious celibacy, and will not condemn the decrees of your church. But what swarms of other kinds of unmarried people fill your capitals and provinces! (1) Batchelors in war and in servitude; batchelors in literature and philosophy, batchelors thro' caprice and voluptuousness, batchelors thro' misery and indigence; batchelors, if we may so express ourselves, even in the married state. And can you then pretend to judge of the ancient population of the Hebrews by your own!

You are perpetually speaking of population, and you cease not to extol luxury! Luxury, the bane of agriculture and morals, the destroyer of empires, or the certain fore-runner of their fall, is every where the object of your encomiums. O thou censurer of Moses, how wise are thy views respecting government, and how deep thy policy!

We

less effect. The reason of this is, that population rather springs from the manners of the people, than from laws given to them. Aut.

(1) Butchelors in war. A queen, a worthy model of all fovereigns, has ordered the officers of her army to encourage the foldiers to marry, and has provided for the support and education of children born of these marriages. Edit.

We might extend this parallel still farther; you know it, sir, but here we stop. These instances suffice to convince you that the Hebrew code yields not the palm for equity and wisdom, to the codes of modern nations, and that your criticisms on your legislatures, and on the customs which they authorise or tolerate, are so many encomiums on ours.

We think, fir, that you must observe with satisfaction, that after your having reslected deeply on a reformation in your laws, you have proposed nothing but what the Jewish law giver ordained three thousand years before you. It is a great satisfaction to us at least, to find, that in the bosom of an ignorant and vulgar nation, he has anticipated by so many ages, the legislative discoveries of the most shining and universal genius of this philosophical age.

To status Bod C aunimonio 1007 lo we remain, &c. &c.

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LETTER V.

man than any of the former

Reflexions on the object, antiquity, duration, &c.

ALTHO' the defence which we have undertaken of our legislature, has already extended to a greater length than we at first proposed, yet we cannot avoid adding here some considerations on its object, antiquity, duration, &c.

This legislature is the glory of Israel in the eyes of all nations. It is the dearest patrimony that our fathers have left us. We should therefore omit nothing that can contribute to make it known, and to give a just notion of it.

"all governments have of supporting them"felves, each of them has besides a peculiar
"one," says the illustrious author of the Spirit of Laws. Sparta formed soldiers, Rome conquerors, Carthage merchants and navigators, &c. &c. But the Jewish lawgiver has another object in view, that of forming a virtuous people, who by a faithful service paid to the only true God, shall give an example to all the nations of the earth, of a pure and reasonable worship. Are we mis-

taken, sir, when we affirm that this object was more noble and more worthy of a wise man than any of the former?

a rule to change nothing in the ancient superstitions, and to leave their people at sull liberty to prositute their adoration to inferior gods, to the stars, the elements, groves, metals, &c. But Moses looked on it as a most important obligation, to instruct all the Hebrews in their duty towards the great Creator and governor of the world. To declare to them his power, justice, goodness, and providence, and to teach them to deserve an happy existence under his Almighty protection, by an exact observance of his laws. We think, fir, that such a conduct as this deserves encomiums, even in a philosophical light!

fupreme Being to his people, as Moses did to the Hebrews? He gives them the most sublime ideas of him, and keeps them continually under the hand of this great God. Every step they make is to be regulated by the fear and love of him. This facred correspondence between God and man ruled, ennobled, fanctified our actions. This glorious duty no ancient legislator ever understood better, or more strongly recommended. "In other legislatures," says Josephus, "piety is "an

" an ingredient of virtue, but in ours, all the "virtues are subordinate parts of piety."

4thly. This religious and wife form of government, is at the same time the most ancient one we know. Minos and Draco, Solon and Lycurgus, Zaleucus and Numa are pofterior, by many ages, to the Jewish legislator; and altho' it is not demonstrated that they (1) borrowed instruction from him, yet it is clear that he could take nothing from them. In this remote antiquity, in those distant ages, in which the groffest corruption of morals, and the most senseless, shameful, and cruel superstitions prevailed on every side, this great man arose, superior to the prejudices of the world, and gave to his people an holy religion, a pure fystem of morality, a wife and just government. And did he owe every thing, do you imagine, to his superior understanding?

givers, is the most learned and virtuous. What reverence he shews to the Divinity, and submission to its decrees! Piety, which is the distinguishing character of his laws, is the constant rule of all his actions. What love for his people, what publick spirit, what gentle-

⁽¹⁾ Borrowed instruction. Altho' this fact is not demonstrated, yet it is at least very probable. Edit.

gentleness! He endures obloquy with patience, he acknowledges his failings with candour, he fees, without murmuring, his brother and his brother's children raifed to the facerdotal office. He puts them himself in possession of this dignity, whilst he leaves his own children, mixed in the crowd of Levites, without hopes of ever rifing (1) any higher. With all these virtues how extensive his knowledge! He is a pathetick orator, a fublime poet, an exact historian, a deep politician, he unites the highest accomplishments to the noblest talents. Would you wish to know the origin of the world, the genealogies of our first parents, the settlements of ancient nations, the rife of arts? Antiquity cannot supply you with more veriable and precious monuments than his writings. His philosophy is not that barren and fruitless one, whose subtilty evaporates in empty reasonings, and whose powers spend themselves in discoveries of no use to the happiness of men; it is not that disastrous philosophy, which, with an axe in its hand, and a veil over its eyes, throws down, overturns, destroys every thing, and builds up nothing; which in its impious phrenzy, makes matter its God, which diftinguishes nian

⁽¹⁾ Any higher. Did he aspire to the regal power? No man ever had a better opportunity of doing it. This question is asked of a Deist.

man from beaft only by his shape, and in order to improve him, sends him back into the woods to dispute for acorns with the animals that inhabit them. No, it is the wise philophy of those good men, who first formed the social state, civilized nations, and made their fellow-creatures happy, by teaching them to submit to the yoke of laws. Certainly a perfon of so exalted a character and so informed a mind, was able to give his people wise laws.

6thly. But Moses tells you that these laws are not his; he is only the interpreter of that God who delivered his people; in the name of that great God, and by commission from him, they were given to our fathers. The obligation to observe them flows from his fovereign will, which is always wife and just, and the only folid foundation of virtue; and the fanctions of these laws are that prosperity, even temporal, which he promifes to them as the reward of their obedience, and those most dreadful scourges which he denounces against them in case of disobedience; these fanctions no other legislator ever presumed (1) to give to his laws, but here they were verified by a wonderful feries of events.

-og named softWie book the visite to 7thly.

- Caronacon Mode bas awall-dades

⁽¹⁾ To give to bis laws. This is an observation of the learned Bishop Warburton, and a proof of Moses's divine legation. See the Divine Legation of Moses. Aut.

7thly. Other legislators have pretended to divine inspiration, but they were scarcely believed, even during their lives, and this belief soon vanished away. This is not the case with regard to Moses's divine legation. Our fathers believed in it, and their descendants do so still. From whence this difference? Is it not because imposition passes away, but truth stands the test.

8thly. Hence that inviolable attachment to our laws which the law-giver has given us, an attachment without example, which the destruction of our government, the dispersion of our tribes, the perfecutions of kings, and the contempt of nations, have never been able to root out of our hearts. Thousands of Jews have given up their lives rather than renounce those laws, or appear to infringe them. In consequence of this, the Mosaick legislature is come down to us, thro' so many ages and revolutions, ever the same, and ever respectable, whilst nothing remains of so many renowned forms of government, but the names of the lawgivers affixed to some fragments of their laws. And not only the Hebrews, but two thirds of this habitable globe revere these laws, and look upon our lawgiver as divinely inspired. What human government ever had a like fuccess?

othly. This duration, this perpetuity of our legislature, this respect which it enjoys for so many ages, and in so many climates, cannot be the effect of chance. Can you account for it by natural means? When you shall have done this, (if to do it is possible) you will have demonstrated that the Jewish was incontestably the greatest of all human lawgivers, and that his people who are, according to you, unworthy of the notice of a politician, deserve to engross his attention better than any other.

noth. But no, the finger of the Lord is here, his power and wilden shine forth too clearly here to leave any doubts.

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To conclude, fir, every part of the Jewish legislature displays the high and divine
wisdom of the legislator. Its doctrines are
rational and sublime; its religious and moral
procepts, holy and pure; its political, military
and civil laws are wise, equitable and mild;
even its ritual laws are founded in reason;
all of them in short, are admirably suited to
the designs and views of the legislator, to the
circumstances of time, place, climate, to the
inclinations of the Hebrews, and to the manners of the neighbouring nations, &c. There
is nothing in this legislature that contradicts
Vol. II.

the laws of nature or of virtue. Every thing here breathes justice, piety, honesty, benevolence. Its object, its antiquity, its origin, its duration, the talents and virtues of the legislator, the respect of so many nations, all these things conspire to prove the excellence of it. (1) Your greatest men have admired it, and looked upon it as the primary source of divine and human law, and you, sir, can see nothing in it but absurdity and barbarism. When you spoke of it in such opprobrious terms, did impartiality guide your criticism?

We have thought fit, fir, to fay thus much in defence of our laws. This indeed is but a poor sketch of an apology, if compared with those of so many learned christians and well-instructed Jews, Abravanel, Jarchi, Maimonides, and before them, Josephus, and the cloquent Philo. Read their writings, fir, do still a better thing, read the text of our laws, and your prejudices will soon vanish. You

⁽¹⁾ Your greatest men. We might quote the Chancellor who, in our memory, has done immortal honour to the kingdom of France by his knowledge and his virtues. This great man had so high a respect for the Jewish laws, he thought them so wise and good, that he got a contraction made of them, and a body of Jewish laws digested under proper heads. But the d'Aguessaus, the Hospitals, the Bacons, &c. &c. are but poor lawyers, men of weak understanding, is compared with our modern philosophers! Edit.

will foon be struck with the excellence of these statutes, and will say to yourself, perhaps not without confusion, These statutes however are noble, and this people, whom I have so often abused, (1) is a wife and intelligent nation. fices.

bas for our parts, fir, when we confider the just censures that have been passed on ancient and modern governments; when we reflect on the baneful fystems fet up in ages paft, and in this one too by philosophers; when we fee the providence of God, his justice, even his existence bontested, fatality introduced, liberty destroyed, the land-marks of right and wrong daringly torn up, or placed with uncertainty by these pretenders to wifdom; man degraded, all the bonds of lociety diffolved, vain imaginations and racking doubts substituted in the place of the most comfortable and falutary truths, &cc.; when we fee thefe things, our spirit is stirred up at all those errors, and we cannot help thinking ourselves happy in having been preserved from them by fuch reasonable and holy laws. 10 Ifrael happy are we, for the things that are pleafing to God are made known unto us. He bath not dealt fo (2) with any nation. We remain, &c.

-ta Month suistlo Vest File .. meitiane man E T-

⁽¹⁾ A wife and intelligent nation. See Deuteronomy, lower that for fourth times bearing ch. 6. v. 7. Aut. See Baruch ch. 4. and Pf. 148.79

will foon be flowed with the excellence of

The question is examined whether the Jewish law authorised and commanded human sacrifices.

hins not without confunon.

Othe general charges of abfurdity and barbarifm, which you lay on the Jewish nation, you add a particular one. If we are to believe you, this just and mild government authorized and commanded human, facrifices. This thocking calumny appears to you to well grounded, that you are perpetually upbraiding us with it. You charged us with it in your first tracts, and you repeat it in your new ones. To is to be found again in your Toleration; it has appeared again in your Philosophy of History, in the Philosophical Dictionary, &c. of fond are you of inculcating it on your readers, fo fure you are of pleasing in the midst of the most (r) tireall thole errors, and we cam tenoitisags smol ourselves happy in having been preferred from

It must be granted, however, that althoryon have often repeated this charge, you are not the first that has laid it to us. Several

⁽¹⁾ Tirefome repetitions. Mr. de Voltaire himself allows, that for some time be bas been fond of repeating subat be bad said before. We trankly own ourselves not to be of the number of those who think such repetitions agree ble. In Edits of any and the said transfer of the said tra

English Free-thinkers have mentioned it (1) before you. As you do little more than transcribe the arguments of these writers it will be a fufficient answer here to lay before you what their learned countrymen (2) have replied in substance and little de dollar overil chele things, for in all their the mitteen eve de-

filed reduced I call out to for a your wheel a little

lowers. For subseum be he of the withirm of It is allowed that some among the Jews have offered buman facrifices to the Gods of the · Canaanites. These sacrifices condemned by the law. The law mentions them with borror.

Such was the deplorable blindness of men for a long time, that they thought they did things acceptable to God when they offered up their fellow-creatures to him. Most nations looked upon these facrifices as the furest means of appealing Heaven, and averting its vengeance. This barbarous piece of fuperstition was spread even thro' the most polished and enlightened nations of the ancient and the new world, but it prevailed chiefly among the Canaanites. These religious cruelties, which were not practifed in other places, but upon extraordinary occasions, were common Agnotified true the that of their fore, and a

fwer to the two works above-mentioned.

⁽¹⁾ Before you. See Christianity as old as the Creation by Tindal and Morgan's Moral Philosopher. Aut.
(2) Have replied. See especially Doctor Leland's An-

among to them, ov For these ambominations chiefly, God had determined to cut them off, and Mofes had most expressly forbid this detestable worship to his people. Thou shalt not, (1) Tays he, let any of thy feed pass thro' the fire to Moloch. Defile not yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. And a little lower. For whoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his feed unto Moloch, he shall surely be put to death, the people of the land. shall stone him with stones. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his feed unto Moloch, and kill him not, then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut bim off, and all that go a whoring after him. our looked amon thefe. facrifices as the lurest

But we cannot conceal it. Notwithstanding all the precautions which the legislator took, and the prohibitions he issued, this infamous worship introduced itself amongst our ancestors, and the scripture, in many places, upbraids them bitterly with it. They were mingled among the heathen, says (2) the Psalmist, and learned their Works, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons, and of their

(2) The Pfalmiff. Pfalm 106. v. 37. &c. 31. 01

See Collimity at still is the Creation

⁽¹⁾ Says be. See Leviticus, ch. 28. v. 21. and ch. 20 v. 2.

their daughters, whom they facrificed unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Go forth, says the Lord (1) to Jeremiah, into the valley of the fon of Hinnom, and fay, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Juda, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever beareth, his ears shall tingle. Because they have for saken me, and have estranged this place, and have burnt incense in it unto other Gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents. They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their fons with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind. Therefore behold the days come, faith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the fon of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter. defiablished exceeded trople of ways for reincome

You fee, fir, when and to whom these Israelites, unworthy of that name, offered those
abominable facrifices. It was not to their
God. It happened when they were forsaking him for strange Gods, or when, in contempt of the law, they mixed the impure
rites of idolatrous worship with the service
which the law prescribes. But you see also
what

abil bies jogrado resolvinowine en tol sluda 1 (1) To Jeremiab. Ch. 19. v. 2. &c.

what horror Moses and the prophets inspired them with, for these shocking practices. House in Gargines Says the Lord (1) to Teles-

West to be considered of the

That the Jewish law, so far from commanding or approving the offering fuch facrifices to God, expressly forbad it.

You tell us however with an air of confidence, which you know how to assume, but which now no longer deceives any one, that altho' the Jewish law condemns sacrifices of human blood, offered by the Jews to the Gods of the Canaanites, yet it commands them to offer fuch to their own God; that fuch facrifices are clearly ordained by the laws of this detestable people, and that there is no point of history better afcertained.

We must own it, sir, these expressions of detestable, execrable people, always surprize us in your writings. We think that these angry epithets ought not to be found in the works of a polite writer, and an humane and tender philosopher. Pray is this conformable to French politeness? Is this the moderation which the spirit of philosophy inspires you rates of idolatrous working with the fathiw

However, let us say no more concerning abuse, let us answer your charge, and see whether

which the law preferibes. But you fee alfo

whether your confident affertions have, I will not fay certainty, but even the fludow of probability. Ignibes built of stealthe of nood and how obaid they belonded

oft. If we are not mistaken, it is hard to read the passages we have quoted, and especially these words of Jeremiah, things which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind, without feeing that it is not only the destination, but the barbarity of those facrifices which the law centures, and the prophets condemn. another is beouther is row to believe that if the levilles had been

2dly. If the God of the Jews had approved of fuch facrifices, would he have stopped the hand of Abraham, who was offering up his fon to him? Satisfied with this trial of his fervant's faith and obedience, he forbids him to ftretch his arm over fo dear a victim, and substitutes another into its place. Does not this conduct, at a time when, according to you, the Canaanites were beginning to facrifice their children to their divinities, shew that the God of Abraham did not resemble the gods of these idolaters, who delighted to fee innocent blood flowing. The refusal of this victim, in these circumstances, was doubtless a striking lesson, by which God, whilst he made a trial of Abraham's faith, meant to give a perpetual lesson to this holy man and to his posterity, of his abhorrence of these barbarous superstitions. bered

3dly. If these facrifices had been prescribed or approved by the law, would it have been so difficult to find examples of them? And how could they be fo uncommon? How happens it that so many holy men, so many pious kings, David, Josias, Aza, Josaphat, Hezekias, &c. never offered fuch facrifices. if the law prescribed and authorized them, and never had recourse to so powerful an engine for obtaining God's affiftance in those perilous circumstances, to which some of them were reduced? is there not great reason to believe, that if these facrifices had been permitted, they would have been more common? We may judge of this by other nations - offer had of A lochard with books

man service to the least Scientist with the 4thly. The Jewish law enters into the most minute detail with respect to sacrifices; it points out what kinds of quadrupeds and birds might be offered unto the Lord, their qualities, the times and circumftances in which they were to be offered, the manner of preparing them for facrifice, the ceremonies which ought to accompany it, &c. If then this law had ordered men to be facrificed, if it had looked on human victims as the most acceptable offerings unto the Lord, is it possible that it should have prescribed nothing with regard to the rites and ceremonies belonging to these sacrifices? Would it not have determined what persons might and should be offered vibs

fered up? On what occasions and in what manner this was to be done? Yet there is no account of this, not one regulation with regard to these objects. We dare affirm it, fir, this silence of the law is a demonstration that it neither required nor approved these bloody facrifices.

5thly. But this is not all. The Jewish law expressly forbids offering such facrifices to the Lord. This passage may be found in the 42d chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 20th and 30th. Thus we read, When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations, (the Canaanites) from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their lands, Take beed to thyfelf, that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee, and that thou enquire not after their gods, faying, How did thefe nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewife, Thou Shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God, for every abomination unto the Lord which be bateth, have they done unto their gods, for even their fons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire to their gods. It is clear that God in this place, not only forbids his people to honour the gods of the Canaanites, but to imitate the manner in which they honoured them. He plainly declares that these facrifices of their fons and daughters, are rites abominable in his eyes, a worship which he abhors abhors and detests. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God, what things soever I command you observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it. Truly, sir, after so clear a prohibition, added to all the sormer reflexions, to believe or maintain that the Jewish law commanded or authorised human sacrifices, is voluntary blindness, and a struggle against evidence.

to the Loid. This of is comay be found in the 42d chapter of Deuter anomy, weres 20th

Objection drawn from Leviticus, ch. 27. v. 29.

Yet you make an objection which must be answered. The book of Leviticus, you say, in (1) v. 27. of ch. 29. expressly forbids redeeming those who have been devoted, it says these very words, they must die, (Premiers Melanges.) And in another place you affirm, that it was expressly ordered by the fewish law to sacrifice men devoted to the Lord. No man devoted shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death. The Vulgate renders it, non redimetur, sed morte morietur. Philosoph. Dict. Art. Jephtha.

to Bour the gods of the Canauntea but to imitate the manner in which they honoured

for the book of Leviticus has not 29 chapters. This is a typographical error, which must be corrected in the new edition of Mr. de Voltaire's works. Edit.

But since it is certain, as we have shewn, that the Jewish law, so far from requiring or approving human facrifices, clearly prohibited them, there is strong reason to believe that the passage of Leviticus which you quote is susceptible of a different meaning from what you give it, and this meaning is obvious.

If you had taken the trouble of reading with attention, and in the original, this chapter of Leviticus, you would have seen, sir, that in the first part of it, it speaks of the Neder or simple vow, after which it was lawful to redeem what was vowed unto the Lord, and that in the 28th verse it speaks of the Cherem a particular and voluntary vow.

The Cherem was a vow of indispensible obligation. It was an irrevocable act of devoting, accompanied with an oath, an absolute confecration and without return, by which a person gave up to the Lord all his rights to a certain thing. Every Ifraelite might thus devote his property, qua babet, qua illius funt. His house, his lands, his cattle, his flaves, &c. and the things thus devoted could not be redeemed for any price whatfoever. Unclean animals were fold for the benefit of the fanctuary, and fuch as were clean were offered up. The lands, the houses, which could not be offered up, remained the property of the temple and

temple and of its ministers. The men, that is children and slaves, for these were the only persons that belonged to the father of the samily, and the only ones he could devote, were not sacrificed; they were consecrated to the Lord, and employed during their whole lives, in the service of the temple and of the priests. In this sense all the Jewish writers, who in all probability understand their laws, explain this 28th verse.

But in the 29th verse which you quote by itself, and on which you lay the greatest stress this Cherem, particular and voluntary vow, is no longer concerned. This verse relates only to those things and persons which are devoted to destruction by the penal Cherem, or folemn anathema, denounced by publick authority. Such were the Canaanites, devoted by God himself to destruction, as a punishment for their detestable abominations. And the inhabitants of Jericho have this folemn anathema pronounced against them in the 6th chapter of Joshua, 17th and 18th verses. It is also pronounced in the 32d chapter of Exodus, and 13th of Deuteronomy, against every individual and city of Ifrael, which should fall into idolatry, and offer facrifice to any other God but the Lord. We fee another example of it in the book of Judges, ch. 21. v. 5. where the congregation of the people of Ifrael is laid under this anathema, sigmoi. and

and engaged to put all those to death who would not meet at Masphat to fight against the Benjamites. And in confequence of this anathema, the inhabitants of Jabeth Gilead, who did not go to the place appointed, were all fmote with the edge of the fword. All persons thus devoted were to be cut off as execrable and accurfed. No ranfom of whatfoever value, could be accepted for them. They were put to death without mercy, but they were not facrificed. The punishment of death and facrifice are different things. There is some difference between these ideas. The confounding of them implies ignorance Toleration, by the text of feritive thanolib ro tha lacrificed his daughter. To which you add

This chapter of Leviticus is to be taken in this fense according to the opinion of all our ancient and modern writers, and their unanimous consent ought, we think, to be of some weight, at least when the knowledge of our laws and customs is in question.

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This interpretation, which you see is not new, reconciles this whole passage of Leviticus persectly well with that horror which the scripture breaths every where against homicide in general, and against religious murders in particular, and with the very clear and express prohibitions which we have quoted out of Deuteronomy. It has besides the advantage of being conformable to the constant practice

practice of the Jewish nation, in which there is no instance of a master sacrificing his slaves to the Lord, or of a father his children, except perhaps that of Jephtha, of which we shall say a few words here.

all friote with the odee of the fword. All

perions thus devoted + &c to be cut off as

Of Jephtha. Whether he really offered up his daughter, and whether this facrifice, supposing it real, was according to the spirit of the law.

You begin, sir, by deciding the question. It appears clearly, you say, in the Treatise on Toleration, by the text of scripture that Jephotha sacrificed his daughter. To which you add in the Philosophical Dictionary. It is evident by the text of the book of Judges, that Jephtha promised to sacrifice the sirst person who should go out of his house to wish him for of his victory. His only daughter met him; he tore off his garments and sacrificed her, after having permitted her to go and weep on the mountains the missortune of dying a maid. I stand to the text, Jephtha devoted his daughten as an whole human offering, and he offered her up.

If you fland to the text you are right, fire Nothing remains but to know whether you understand it well. But when you fay that Jephtha promised to facifice the first person who should go out of his bouse to wish him joy of his

his victory, and that he permitted his daughter to go and weep on the mountains for the miffortune of dying a maid, is this standing to the text, or accommodating it to your own ideas? Where do you find in the text this wishing joy and this misfortune of dying a maid? Others can see nothing in it but a vow to sacrifice, not the first person, but the first thing that should present itself when he entered his house; and the permission given to the girl is this, to go and bewail her virginity, and not the missortune of dying a maid. These expressions are not quite of the same import. Your's decide the question, those of the text leave it undetermined.

And here, what appears to you evident and certain by the text, has appeared very doubtful to many learned men, Jews (1) and christians. They think, on the contrary, and with good reason, that Jephtha's daughter was never really sacrificed, but only consecrated to the service of the tabernacle in perpetual virginity; and that this consecration, this Vol. II.

comes it that it never and any imitatoric?

⁽i) And christians. See among others, what the learned commentators on the English Bible, and on the Universal History have said on this subject. Add to these Grotius, Le Clerc, Father Houbigeant, a new differtation lately given by Mr. Baver, but especially Schudt, who has collected the best things that have been said in favour of the consecration of Jephtha's daughter to cellebacy. Aut.

necessity of passing her days in celibacy, a state most humbling in the sight of all Jewish women, compelled her to go and weep upon the mountains, and drew tears from her unhappy father, who by this was deprived of all hopes of seeing any offspring from his darling child.

However, fir, if we did allow that this facrifice was real, as many of our writers ancient and modern have supposed, would it follow from this, that it was according to the fpirit of the law? Jephtha might think himfelf obliged to offer it, but was Jephtha infallible? Might he not have been led aftray by a zeal without understanding, by a scrupulous and erroneous attachment to his imprudent vow? Is it by the example of a fingle fallible man, or by the constant practice of a nation, and by the very text of the law, that the sense of this law is to be afcertained? If Jephtha acted only in obedience to a clear and known law, if this vow flowed from zeal and piety, and the execution of it proceeded from a laudable firmness, how comes it that it never had any imitators? Why did not the inspired writers in any place praise this action, or propose it as a model? In this case would St. Auftin, and almost all the fathers of the church, have cenfured, it as you fay they have done? And would all those writers ancient and modern,

who have believed the facrifice to be real, joyned with Josephus in saying, that it was neither conformable to the law, nor agreeable to God.

But the scripture says, that Jephtha was filled with the spirit of God, and St. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, praises Jephtha, and places him with Samuel and David. (Toleration, article, if intolerance, &c.)

Yes, fir, the scripture says that Jephtha was filled with the spirit of God; but it does not say any where that this happened when he devoted his daughter and fulfilled his vow. And it appears to us that christians prove satisfactorily, that if St. Paul places Jephtha in the lift of the heroes of Israel, it is not on account of this sacrifice, of which he does not speak, althe he mentions that of Abraham.

But you add again, St. Jerom, in his epiftle to Julian, says, Jephtha offered up his daughter to the Lord, and on account of this, the apostle places him in the list of saints. God, says Don Galmet, does not approve these vows, but when they are made he will have them executed, were it only to punish those who make them. Ibidem.

St. Jerom, fir, was one of the most learned men of his time; he understood our language, guage, our history, our geography, &c. But we do not take him for an infallible authority, even among christians, nor Don Calmet neither. However, when St. Jerom said that Jephtha was accounted a saint for sacrificing his daughter, he also said, that it was not the offering, but the intention of the offerer which was pleasing to the Lord. Non sacrificium placet, sed animus offerentis. This is the observation of Don Calmet, to whom you are indebted for the quotation out of the epistle to Julian, which you probably never read.

Since then it is not certain that Jephtha's facrifice was real, and that even if it was real, it does not appear to have been conformable to the law; this example proves nothing in favour of your hypothesis. The others which you produce are as weak.

§ 5.

light the transfer of the feether than the walf-

Other pretended examples of human sacrifices. Of Agag, of the thirty two thousand Madianite women, of Jonathan, &c.

You look upon the death of Agag, sir, as a consequence of the Levitical law. It was, you say, (Treatise of Toleration, and in other places, for this charge is often repeated,) in virtue

virtue of this law, that Samuel cut Agag in pieces, whom Saul had pardoned, and it was even for having spared Agag that Saul was reproved of the Lord.

You are right, sir, but since the law was so express, was not Saul wrong in transgressing it? We must observe however that Agag, who lay under the anathema pronounced against the Amalekites, as being one of them, was put to death for another reason besides, for his personal cruelty. As thy sword, says Samuel, when he is putting him to death, bath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. What reason then could there be for any tenderness towards this barbarous man?

You conclude from his death, that the Jews offered up human victims, witness, you say, king Agag cut in pieces. In reality, we may look on the death of Agag as a real sacrifice. In this fatal scene we see a vow, a priest, a victim, it was therefore a true sacrifice. (Treatise of Toleration.)

No, sir, Agag cut in pieces, does not prove that the fews offered human facrifices to God. He is put to death, not facrificed. And to say that we perceive here a priest, a victim, &c. and that it was therefore a true facrifice, is a play of words. By a stratagem unworthy of you,

you, and which can scarcely mislead any one, you conclude from the figurative fignification of a word to the proper one.

There is not more truth in what you say, (Philosophy of History, article, Human Victims) speaking of the Madianites, that Moses commanded all the males to be put to death, but the females to be preserved, of which thirty-two only were offered unto the Lord. And (Treatise of Toleration) you say, that many Commentators affert that thirty-two girls were offered unto the Lord, Cesserunt in partem Domini triginta duæ animæ.

These thirty-two girls were that part of the spoil which was reserved for the Lord. They were intended to serve in his tabernacle as slaves, therefore they were not sacrificed. If many commentators affert that they were sacrificed, they affert it falsely. The text does not say it, or rather it implies quite the contrary. Believe us, sir, keep to the text.

But farther you say, (Premiers Melanges) that in obedience to this law, the Levitical law, Saul wanted to offer up his son. The first Jew-ish king offered up men. He swore he would offer up unto the Lord the man that should eat. Luckily the nation was wifer than him, and would not suffer the king's son to be sacrificed, for having eaten a little honey.

The

The first Jewish king offered up men! What men did he sacrifice? When and where? Be so good as to inform your readers. What a notion must we form of you, sir, when we hear you affirming coolly such palpable salsehoods! Altho' you have no respect for posterity or the present generation, yet reverence yourself.

He fwore to offer unto the Lord the man that should eat. No, sir, he did not do this. He prohibited eating, and swore to put any one to death, who should transgress this order. Jonathan would have been put to death for having disobeyed the order of his general, and having incurred by his disobedience that curse, that punishment which had been just denounced, but he would not have been facrificed to the Lord. To be punished capitally is not to be facrificed. When your kings engage by oath never to pardon duellists, and that in consequence of this, such offenders are put to death, is this a facrifice offered unto the Lord?

\$ 6.

Whether it is a dispute of words, that the Jews Sacrificed men to the divinity or not.

Lastly, we read the following extraordinary reasoning in your Melanges. "Learned men "have

" have canvassed this question, whether the "Jews really sacrificed men to God, as so "many other nations did. This is a verbal dispute. Those whom this nation devoted, were not slaughtered on an altar with religious rites, but notwithstanding they were really offered up."

If learned men have canvassed this question, it is a proof that they have sometimes canvassed very ridiculous ones. They must have known how much the Jewish law condemned these practices of idolaters, and this was sufficient to persuade them that the law never prescribed these facrisices.

It is a dispute about words. If it is so, and you look upon it as such, why do you return to it so often? Why do you repeat it over and over to us in so many different ways? A dispute about words ought not to engage so much of your attention.

But again, how do you prove that this is a verbal dispute? Those whom this nation devoted, you say, were not slaughtered on an altar with religious rites. True, sir, but you do not say all; add to this that they never were offered up to the Divinity, and consequently that these were not real sacrifices. Otherwise we must suppose, that every enemy, every rebellious citizen killed in a city taken by storm,

florm, is facrificed to God. What a number of facrifices then must have been offered up on the fingle night of St. Bartholomew!

But you fay, notwithstanding they were really offered up, that is, they were killed, still you play upon words.

We conclude by repeating, fir, that in the 29th verse of 27th chap. of Leviticus, no facrifices are meant, but dreadful punishment, notorious vengeance. Those who were devoted by publick authority were put to death, but they were not offered up. In languages there is a proper name for every thing; he who calls that an offering and a sacrifice, which others call penalty of death and military execution, is guilty of an evident abuse of words, and of an arbitrary confusion of ideas.

No one disputes but human sacrifices were common among the Canaanites, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Romans, &c. History informs us of this; innumerable testimonies of weight confirm it. There were ceremonies and appointed times for these barbarous acts; government and religion equally tolerated them; inhuman priests slaughtered these unhappy victims; their blood slowed upon the altars, and the people offered them up unto their gods as the fittest oblation for meriting their favour and averting their vengeance. Such instances

instances should have been pointed out in the history of our fathers; then you would have been believed; but an ill-interpreted text and a childish equivocation are not sufficient authorities for charging them with so detestable a crime, which they went to punish in the people of Canaan, a worship which their law clearly forbids, and of which you scarcely find one example in all their annals, and that too condemned by those who acknowledge it, and which has not been followed by any one of the nation.

Yes, fir, so far from thinking that our law prescribes or approves those barbarous usages, any one who is the least acquainted with our history and laws, will confess, that the abolition of these horrid rites is owing to our religion, and to the others which sprang from it. And you, a learned writer and impartial philosopher, come and accuse our fathers of this practice! Truly you must be very sure of your readers, since you are not assaid least the manifest salfehood of these charges should give them a bad opinion of your knowledge or your ability.

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Letter from Joseph Ben Jonathan to David Wincker, concerning the following fort Commentary.

Dear DAVID, Medical bus planes

I Received the new extracts of our friend Aaron's work which you fent me. I have translated them, and published them under the form of a commentary as well as the former.

This form feems to have generally pleafed; and indeed it has fome advantages. Befides its caufing variety, it prefents the difficulties to the reader in a more distinct manner, and expressed in the very words of the author. The answers follow, and if they are satisfactory, they are more easily apprehended in this way.

Besides, as I told you before, Commentaries are coming again into fashion, with this difference however, that the commentators of this age are very far from being enamoured with their text. If Aaron does not love his, no one will have reason to be surprized; it is the fashion of the times. If any one should complain of this, he can shelter himself under great authorities, you understand

me, and what is still better, under good reasons.

Adieu, present our worthy friend my best wishes for his prosperity, and believe me sincerely and tenderly,

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his, nowed will there realed to be furthered; it is the fathion of the times. If any one fooded compain of this is can thefter bloom few under ereat outlookes you enderlooked

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A SHORT COMMENTARY

4.0 . N. 184

EXTRACTED FROM A GREATER.

For the use of Mr. de VOLTAIRE, and of those who read his Works.

FIRST EXTRACT.

Of Abraham, whether he ever existed. Who he was.

LIKE all great men, fir, you are born to rule the age you live in, and to reform all its prejudices. The title of commentator was become (1) the lowest in literature. You have deigned to take it up; it is now ennobled, people on every side slock to assume it after you. Happy the man that can suftain it with like talents and success!

By your comments on the great Corneille, on the excellent author of the Treatise on Crimes and Punishments, &c. you have done honour to their works, and stamped an additional value on them. Might we expect by commenting on your's, to have the happiness of

-A most too look and to freed away

Datification.

⁽¹⁾ The lowest in literature. This was Pope's opinion. "From an author," he says, "I became a transition, from a translator, a commentator, I shall soon be nothing at all." Edit.

of contributing to their perfection? This defire at least, we may say, animates us, and after the desence of our sacred writings, it is our principal object.

And therefore we shall not spend time in extolling the beauties that shine forth in every part of your writings. Unhappy they indeed who want the help of a commentator to perceive them! We think to contribute more effectually to your credit, by laying before you those little inaccuracies which you have fallen into, on subjects which interest us, and of which you sometimes speak, without having sufficiently dived into them.

We hope, fir, that you will look favourably on this our zeal. You have too great a regard for truth to be offended at those who shew it to you with all that deference and respect which are due to you. Let us then begin by the history of Abraham.

Crimes and Pendharton, etc. you have done

Whether the history of Abraham is certain, and whether the Jews descend from this patriarch.

The Jews boast of their descent from A-braham; this descent is their glory, which you want to rob them of. With a view to this, you begin your critical enquiries on this patriarch,

patriarch, by comparing his history to those fables which are told of some famous characters of antiquity.

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"Abraham is one of those names famous in Asia Minor and Arabia, like Thaut among the Egyptians, Zoroaster among the Persians, &c. people better known by their

" celebrity, than by well-attested history,

" (Philosoph. Dict. art. Abraham)."

Comment.

The history of Thaut, Zoroaster, &c.; are indeed not the best attested. Of these famous names we scarcely know any thing but uncertain facts, dubious dates, false or contradictory accounts.

But sincerely, do you really believe, fir, that Abraham is not better known to us? Must we remind you that we have his history connected and particular, written by an historian who was near his time, and whose great-grand-father lived above thirty years with this patriarch's grandson?

In this history, the exact and impartial historian informs us of the origin and native country of this great man, of his travels, his virtues

virtues and failings. He there points out to the Hebrews, who were returning into the country which Abraham had inhabited, the places where the patriarch, his fon and grandfon had refided, the altars they had built, the wells they had dug, the lands which they had acquired, the kings and nations with whom they had dealings or alliances. He enters into the fame particulars on the various places which his twelve great-grandsons had rendered famous by their adventures or their crimes. Is this the way in which man generally speak of a fabulous person?

As a proof of their descent from this patriarch, the Jews produce their genealogies, which are looked upon among them as authentick genealogies, on which were founded not only the hope and common right of the nation to the possession of the land of Canaan, but also the respective rights of each tribe, and of every individual in each tribe. Tell us, fir, what ancient family can produce titles so incontestible of their descent.

But this is not all; the Jews are not the only people who claim the title of Abraham's descendants; the Ishmaelite-Arabians boast of it too. Thus two nations, according to you, so different, that if we judge of them by the examples of our modern bistories, it would be hard to conceive that they could have the same origin;

prigin; two nations ever jealous, ever enemies of each other, so far from mutually disputing this common descent, join in attesting it to the whole earth, and both of them bear in their slesh the proof and stamp of it.

The testimony of these two nations, althouse throng in itself, is yet confirmed by that of two other nations, who are also neighbours and enemies, the Moabites and Ammonites, who say they descend from the nephew of Abraham; and it is also confirmed by the nations of Canaan, who by the name of Hebrews, which they gave to our fathers, declared them strangers to their country, and originally coming from beyond the Euphrates.

In short, the God whom the Jews wor-shipped, the religion which they professed, the land which they lived on, the monuments which they had before their eyes, their traditions, their scriptures, every thing announced Abraham. If after this number of proofs, the existence of the patriarch, and the descent of the Jews are not well-attested facts, there is not a well-attested fact in all ancient history. And yet you say considently.

ham; whether they telling the Testimony of

"The Jews boast of their descent from Vol. II. Abra-

" Abraham, as the Franks do from Hector, and the Britons from Tubal." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Probably then the Franks and Britons have their genealogies also; their religion, government, the common and respective rights of the cities, and of private persons, every thing among them tends to this point; every thing supposes and demonstrates this descent! Their neighbours, their enemies agree in it; their writers attest it, and monuments of every kind confirm this testimony.

Truly, fir, one is apt to lose all patience, who considers that multitude of connected facts which establish the descent of the Jews, and then hears a celebrated writer coolly comparing these incontestible titles to the vain pretensions of the Franks and the Britons. However let us not be too hasty, but listen without passion to your extraordinary arguments on this head.

front of the four are use well-attefied facts, areas not an ell-attended facts.

Traditions of the Arabians concerning Abrabam; whether they destroy the Testimony of the Jewish writers.

In order to cast a doubt on the history of Abraham,

Abraham, you mix fome Arabian fables with the accounts of our facred writings, and feigning merely to attack these fabulous traditions, you say,

Section A Junity Texting and Many Sep

"I speak here only of prophane history, for we have such descrence for the Jewish history as we ought to have. We are on"ly speaking to the Arabians." (Philosophical Dictionary, Article Abraham.)

bus on of sanitation of the work of the Comments

You are only speaking to the Arabians! We understand you, sir, what need of dissimulation? You enjoy this long time the noble privilege of saying whatever comes into your head. Take off the mask, and attack us without disguise.

Tisk Does it follow the became the Acadians make Abreham the test index of Merce, the

"They tell us that he (Abraham) was the fon of a potter, that he built Mecca and died there." (Ibidem.)

Comments Comments

Altho the Arabians fay that Abraham was the fon of a potter, yet Genesis does not say H 2 it. You might have spared yourself the trouble of ascribing this to it (1) as you do. A critick of your reputation should be a little more exact, sir.

The Arabians tell us, &c. What Arabians? Is it the ancient? You have not their books. Is it the modern Arabians? But the modern, who are posterior to Moses by 2000 years, are writers without critical knowledge or taste, and exceedingly ignorant of every thing that preceded the Hegira. You allow this yourself, and you leave pure springs, to go and draw out of those muddy waters! Do you oppose such authorities to that of a judicious writer, well-instructed, and who lived nearly at the same time?

The Arabians fay that Abraham built Mecca. Well, fir, what matters it whether they fay it or not? Or what are these Arabian fables to us? Does it follow that because the Arabians make Abraham the builder of Mecca, the existence of the patriarch is doubtful, and the descent of the Jews uncertain? Must well-attested facts be denied, because ignorant writers have, so many ages after, mixed fabulous stories with them.

-arT . I the Arabians fay that Abraham was

⁽¹⁾ As you do. See Philosophical Dictionary. (Article Abraham.)

name until after they removed to Eabylon? This affertion requires Proofs, produce yours.

Traditions of the Persians concerning Abraham; whether the books in which the Persians speak most this patriarch are prior to those of the Jews. (bids) "Allo I me anomal and "

From the Arabian traditions you go to those of the Persians, and you would almost make us believe that Abraham was a Persian.

there? Was it before the Hebrews were acquainted with it? Oxers it after they were

"Probably the Jewish nation knew the name of Abraham only thro' the Babylo"nians." (Ibid.)

and then we that Comment. select is due to

Probably. Thus you oppose probabilities and conjectures to a multitude of facts, to monuments, to traditions, to history, to the records of a nation, even to the testimony of its enemies, &c.! And what fort of probabilities too!

They knew the name of Abraham only thro' the Babylonians. What is your meaning here, fir? Is it that Abraham was a Caldean? Our writings attest it and we believe it. Or that our fathers were not acquainted with that name

. Se her respect collect to very someth.

name until after they removed to Babylon? This affertion requires proofs, produce yours.

Traditions of the Posts of concerning Abraham?

"This name of Bram, Abram, Ibrahim, " was famous in Perfia." (Ibid.)

From the Ara themmon itions you go to

those of the Perlians, and you would almost Yes, but when did it begin to be famous there? Was it before the Hebrews were acquainted with it? Or was it after they were fpread thro' Persia, and gave this name celebrity there? You should have cleared that up. Perhaps you are going to do it.

Text

"The Persians pretended that this Abra-" ham, or Ibrahim, was from the country of " Bactria, and that he lived near the city of " Balek." (Philosophy of History, Article Abraham.) Comment. Comment & Comment & Comment Comment

But did they pretend this before the times in which the Jews place the birth of Abraham?

fir? Is it that Abra txeT wa writings attelf it and we believe it.

" In him they respected a prophet of the " religion of Zoroaster." (Ibid.)

Comment.

fived under Daristenmonon of Hyflafper, and was confequently many contenies police-

They might have done more, for according to you,

Darius, and others there to bust will

"Many learned men pretend that he was the fame lawgiver whom the Greeks call "Zoroaster." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

raffer whom thev. tenment. well mondy refler

Many learned men. Why do you not name them? We have always an ill opinion of these vague quotations, and, you know, with good reason. Pray, sir, name these learned men, and then we shall see what respect is due to their authority.

Pretend that he was the same lawgiver, &c. But do these learned men acknowledge only one Zoroaster; or more than one? At what period do they place them? This date is of consequence; we require it from you, and you do not fix it,

(1) Many learned men, fir, ancient and modern, distinguish two Zoroasters; one who lived

the willer hiller Zoro-

⁽¹⁾ Many learned men, ancient, &c. See Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres, vol. 28. Aut.

lived under Darius, the son of Hystaspes, and was consequently many centuries posterior to the father of the faithful. The other is of uncertain date, but some of the learned place him five or six hundred years before Darius, and others farther back still.

If your learned men speak of that Zoroafter who was a cotemporary of Darius, the
period is too recent to prove any thing against
our writings. And if it be the ancient Zoraster whom they consoned with Abraham,
permit us to ask you on what foundation
they do it?

vague quotations, and enow, with good

"The ancient religion of all the nations from the Euphrates to the Oxus, was called ed Kish Ibrahim, Millat Ibrahim," (Ibid.)

But do thefor learn the money acknowledge only one Zoroafter; or more than one? At what

The ancient religion. This expression is very vague, fir, it would have been proper to determine the extent of it.

Some learned men, fir, and among others, the learned Hyde, Prideaux, Pocock, &c. diffinguish two ancient religions of the Perfians; the one before, the other under Zoro-after the cotemporary of Darius, who, they fay

Tay, reformed the ancient worthip of fire, and taught the Persians to acknowledge but one God, the creator and governor of the world, and to pay their homage to him. We shall willingly grant that this reformation was called Kish Ibrahim, Millat Ibrahim; but that the ancient religion of these nations, the religion that was professed before Abraham was known by the Hebrews, was called Kish Ibrahim, is what ought to be proved, and what, we give you notice, you will find it hard to prove. But yet you say,

he affures us, that the Zoroafter had been

"This is confirmed by all the enquiries made on the fpot by the learned Hyde." (Ibid.)

Have you read Hyde, fir? We never make bets; but the chances are that you have not,

No, fir, you have not read Hyde; if you had, you would have taken care not to bring him in. You are too fond of truth, fir, and too cunning.

We have not now the work of this learned man before us; but we have it present enough in our minds, to be able to assure you, that the learned Hyde is of a quite different opinion from you, and that he is so far from

from believing that the Persian traditions and writings invalidate the accounts given of Abraham in the scriptures, that he thinks those traditions and writings confirm them.

Hyde does indeed fay, that by bis enquiries made on the spot, it appears that the ancient religion of the Persians, the religion of Zoroaster, was called Kish Ibrahim, Millat Ibrahim; but, sir, the learned Hyde acknowledges only one Zoroaster, the cotemporary of the son of Hystaspes, who was posterior to the removal of the Jewish nation to Babylon; he assured us, that this Zoroaster had been instructed in the Jewish religion, that he was acquainted with their doctrines, and had improved himself by their writings; that most of the Persian writers agree in this, and that agreeably to this persuasion, they call their religion the religion of Abraham.

Such is the opinion of the learned Hyde; and you, fir, who quote Hyde and rest on his authority, come and tell us, that the Jews borrowed their religion from the Persians, their laws also, and the name of their patriarch; and that the small fewish nation, which is of very late date, had no doctrines nor fixed religion; in a word, did not know how to write until after its removal into Babylon! Between ourselves be it said, sir, this is carrying the abuse of a great name very far.

Instead

Inflead of Hyde, whom probably you never read, and who is really neither an easy nor a pleafing writer, open the learned memoirs of l'Abbé Foucher on the religion of (1) the ancient Persians; and you will find that he speaks nearly in the same terms with Hyde. He diffinguishes, it is true, and this is an happy idea, two Zoroafters, of which he thinks the cotemporary of Darius was the fecond. But upon the whole he believes with Pocock, Reland. Prideaux, and the oriental writers mentioned by Hyde, that this Zoroafter was a Jew, and had been a disciple of Daniel, or of some other of those illustrious Hebrews who were raifed to the highest employments by the kings of Persia; that from a Jew he became chief of the Magi, that he reformed the Persian religion according to that of his ancestors; that with this view he gave a sublimer fense to the worship of fire, announced the unity of God, the necessity of wor-Thipping him only, &c.

He adds, that this cunning impostor, after having carefully collected what remained of the books of the ancient Zoroaster, and what was known of him by tradition, compiled the whole, having added much of his own, and published it under the name of the ancient

admost in the dames manner that our facred

⁽¹⁾ The ancient Persians. See the Memoirs of the Accademy of Belles Lettres, vol. 27.

cient Zoroaster; that not being satisfied with the credit he acquired by this great name, he wrote some books under the title of Abraham, in order to shew that this patriarch, who was then so highly revered in the east, had been one of the great partizans of the religion of fire, when understood according to his explanation; that from thence this religion was called Kish Ibrahim, Millat Ibrahim.

And this learned academician gives us a proof, with Prideaux, Reland, Pocock, Hyde, &c. that the books of Zoroafter, those very books with which you have often upbraided us in a triumphant manner, were written by a Jew, or by a person well acquainted with the Jewish religion; it is this, we see a firiking conformity between those writings and ours; not only some laws are found in them very fimilar to those of Moses on the diffinction of animals, clean and unclean, the keeping the facred fire up, the payment of tythes, the conservation of the priesthood in the fame family, the confecration of the chief magi, &c. but belides, the author uses in many places the thoughts and words of our fcriptures; he partly copies the plaims of David, he relates the history of the creation nearly in the fame terms with Genefis, he fpeaks of Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Solomon, almost in the same manner that our sacred writers do.out Med to See the Memorian and To aid Tray of Belles Lettres, vol. 27. This is the information, fir, which l'Abbé Foucher can give you; and he has (1) already taught you fomething, if you have taken the pains to read the last volumes of the memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres.

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betshined and engage, has translated

(1) Aiready taught you something. The following note is at the bottom of one of l'Abbé Foucher's Memoirs. Mr. de Voltaire, by a very extraordinary mistake, transforms the title of a book into a man. (This work is called, Sadder.) Zoroaster, he says, in the writings preserved by Sadder, feigns that God, &c. The author scah. Besides, this Magi did not preserve the writings of Zoroaster, but pretended to give an abridgement of them. I would venture to lay a wager that Mr. de Voltaire never read the Sadder, nor Mr. Hyde's book."

Since this l'Abbé Foucher's remark, Mr. de Voltaire has spoke with more exactness of the Sadder. There is consequently great reason to believe that l'Abbé Foucher has taught him, that the Sadder was a poem and not a man. But the illustrious writer will not allow that he is obliged to the learned academician for this information; he denies his having made this mistake. It would have been more honourable to own it, and thank l'Abbé Foucher for rectifying it. Voltaire may be a man of honour, and a great man too, without understanding the Persian language, and being acquainted with the Sadder; but however some thanks are due to those who instruct us. Aut.

It is certainly with relation to this mistake of Mr. de Voltaire, that we read the following words in a work called, Defence of the Books of the Old Testament. "At "least the philosopher knows now that the Sadder is a Book. I believe he did not know so much some years ago." Mr. de Voltaire's answer to l'Abbé Foucher's note, has given no satisfaction to any one, A droll answer is no proof, Edit.

But perhaps you prefer to the opinions of Hyde, Prideaux, and l'Abbé Foucher, that of the bold and industrious academician who travelled into Judea, into the midst of the Perses, and who after having studied amongst them their ancient language, has translated into your language the so much extolled Zend-Avesta, which he has lately published. But this learned man, sir, is not more favourable to you, than those we have just named.

Indeed Mr. Anquetil does not think that Zoroaster was a Jew, or that he borrowed his doctrines of the Jews; he believes him a Persian by birth, and a descendant of the ancient kings of that country; but he represents him to us as going from Irak to Babylon to study mathematicks, astronomy, all the sciences, and then teaching them in that capital, where he had Pythagoras for a disciple. He represents him to us, as "informing himself of doctrines 'till then (1) un"known to him, as transported at the fight of

⁽¹⁾ Unknown to bim. These doctrines, says Mr. Anquetil, were ascribed to Heomo. But who was Heomo? An ancient legislator of the Persians! Is it probable that a Persian, of the birth and talents of Zoroaster, was obliged at the age of thirty, to go to Chaldea to learn the great articles of the ancient legislator of the Persians? Was Heomo, Abraham? That this patriarch, when he was quitting Chaldea, taught there the principles of the existence, unity of God, &c. is what all the Arabian and

" of those traditions which instruct him in " the origin of the human race, and in the " cause of all those evils which oppress it." Now at what time was Zoroafter engaged in these enquiries? At a time, says Anquetil, when the Jews were well known in Perfia. And let us add on our fide, at a time when the prophecies of Isaiah, which were shewn to Cyrus, the ordinances of that prince and of his fuccessors in favour of the Jews and of their religion, the reputation, the knowledge, the interest of many amongst them, who were feen in the first employments, must have spread the knowledge of their doctrines and their laws, the hiftory and the names of their patriarchs thro' all the provinces, and especially thro' the capital of the empire.

This learned academician does not admit either, so great a conformity between our books and Zoroaster's, as Pocock, Prideaux, l'Abbé Foucher, the authors quoted by Hyde, &c. but besides that, Mr. Anquetil allows that the Zend-Avesta does not contain all the works of the Persian law giver, and that the oriental writers quoted by Hyde, may have seen some of them in Persia that were not known in India; this learned man does not deny

and Persian writers hold. But this opinion does not invalidate the Jewish monuments, nor what they relate of Abraham; quite the contrary. Aut.

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deny that there is some conformity even between those books which he has translated
and ours. There are indeed some (1) prayers,
(2) laws and doctrines very similar to ours.
There is a Supreme Being, Eternal Creator of
the world, and the origin of all other beings,
a single man and woman, first parents of the
human race, their temptation, their fall, the
great serpent their enemy and the enemy of
all their posterity, &c. Ormused says in it,
"I am, a word of light, O Zoroaster, which
"I command you to announce to the whole
"world."

If this clear conformity of expressions, laws and doctrines, is but the effect of chance, or as Mr. Anquetil thinks, a consequence of the ancient traditions of mankind, it certainly does not prove that the Persian legislator borrowed his laws and doctrines from the Jews; but for the very same reason it cannot

(1) Prayers. One of them begins thus, "I implore thee, almighty Ormuld, let my cry come unto think ear, let my voice reach thee." Aut.

⁽²⁾ Laws. Such are, those amongst others quoted above on the conservation on fire, &c. and those respecting women in their menstruous seasons. They are reckoned by these laws unclean, every thing that they touch is unclean, they are to be confined in a separate apartment, the husband is forbidden under pain of death to have any communication with his wife. In a word they almost are the same with the Levitical laws, and the slight differences which appear, shew plainly on which side stand superstition and the copy. Aut.

cannot prove, that the Jews borrowed their's from the Persians. Thus, fir, all the little arguments which you have drawn, fometimes from the conformity of our laws and doctrines with those of the Perfians, and from the names of Ibrabim, Kifh Ibrabim, &c. will fall to the ground under the reasonings of Anquetil, as well as Hyde, Prideaux, l'Abbé Foucher, &c. ly shirt to redmun land out "

" tain, is as it were fivallowed up in a mint. But further, fir, observe how well you agree with the learned man of whom we are speaking. You give us the Zend-Avefta for one of the most ancient books known upon earth; you go still further, and call it the most ancient book in another place; and Mr. Anquetil whole interest it would be rather to throw back than to bring forward the period of Zoroafter and of his works, places them about the middle of the fixth century before the christian era. What! fir, the Zend-Avesta, a work of the fixth century before the christian era, is the most ancient book in the world!

Open Mr. Anquetil's translation, in every page you fee the two principles; every where Ariman contends with Ormusd; and you, sir, would perfuade us, that the two principles were really admitted in Perfia only in the time of Manes. whose sin to militard abbuses I ddflodid

ico Sir did dieser, and Mr. ode Valerice extells it ad coll

old. A respectable piece of antiquity weekly 10 Marion

favourable obligion of the character of Zon-

The wills in the ancient continuent of the morting word of

You extol the books of Zoroafter to us. and his translator has boldness and fincerity enough to inform us, " that if we except " fome ideas of the divinity which are noble " enough, and a scheme of morality pure " enough, these famous books are nothing " but long litanies; that they clash with "our manner of thinking and writing; that " the fmall number of truths which they con-" tain, is as it were fwallowed up in a mul-"titude of puerilities; that these writings " are flat and ridiculous, and full of as bad "reasoning as the Alcoran, and as tiresome "(1) and difgusting as the Sadder." Such are, according to Mr. Anquetil's opinion, the famous books of the Persian legislator. If you feriously compare these rhapsodies to the pathetick discourses and sublime poetry of Moses and of our prophets, we pity you. A philosophical fever must in this case, have much impaired your tafte. a work of the fixth century before the chris-

But besides, Mr. Anquetil holds an unfavourable opinion of the character of Zoroaster himself. He looks upon him as a wellinformed

would northade any that the true branchies were

⁽i) And difgusting as the Sadder. These are the words of the Abbé Renaudot, speaking of the Sadder, he calls it Sordidissimus, and Mr. de Voltaire extolls it to us I He calls it the ancient comment of the most ancient book on earth, and this comment is perhaps 250 or 300 years old. A respectable piece of antiquity truly! Edit.

informed philosopher, but he cannot help acknowledging at the same time, that this great man was an enthusiast, an impostor, a perfecutor, who, in order to establish his religion, (1) caused the blood of nations to flow.

To return, fir; let the learned form what fystems they please on Zoroaster, and the sacred books of the Persians, it is evident that before any advantage can be taken against us from the conformity of those books with ours, and from the names of Kish Ibrahim, Millat Ibrahim given to the ancient religion of those nations, it must be proved, and folidly too, that those Persian books were prior to ours, and that the religion which they taught was called Kish Ibrahim, &c. before Abraham was known of the Hebrews. Upon this, fir, we wait for your proofs. They may form a curious article in your Questions encyclopédiques. It will be worth while to see you contending against Freret, Renaudot, Hyde, Pocock, Prideaux, Foucher, Anguetil, &c. and shewing to all these learned men, that with all their application, their skill in ancient and modern languages, and all their enquiries

⁽¹⁾ Caused the blood of nations to flow. This is an instance of the toleration practised by Zoroaster and his Persians. He declared war against the king of Tourans to sorce him to embrace his religion. This is a new proof that there were no religious wars, except amongst fews and Christians! Edit.

enquiries on the spot, they are less acquainted with these matters than you are.

dengton scholles erder 100 ella blithe kis religion,

Whether the Indians were the first who knew Abraham.

It is a proverb in your country, fir, that 'tis the privilege of travellers to tell lies. You are not a great traveller, fir, but you lead us very far, from Palestine into Arabia, from Arabia into Persia, from Persia into India. I hope you do not intend to play the traveller on us! However by travelling with you, one may learn very curious and sensible things. We are taught for instance, that Abraham was first known in India. For, you say, if many learned men have afferted that Abraham was the Zerdust or Zoroaster of the Persians.

Johnson Aspert Text. ?

"Others affert that he is the Brama of "the Indians, which is not demonstrated." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

Comment.

We do not ask you here the names of those learned men; we are acquainted with one of them; yourself, sir. Altho' this opinion

the banker the blood of notions

is not demonstrated, yet you gravely maintain it in your Philosophy of History. But tho' you have not demonstration of this, yet probably you have some proofs; let us see them.

" The Indians catted heir God Bramachel

"It feems that this name, Bram, Brama, "Abraham, is one of the most common names among the ancient nations of Asia." (Philosophy of History.)

Brama and Brachntnemmone fome fimilitude

It matters not whether the name is common; this is not the question; but the question is whether they are the same names. Now one of these is an Hebrew, the other an Indian name; the one signifies bigh father of a multitude, the other, (1) powerful spirit.

(1) Powerful spirit. Mr. Holwell, who lived a long time in India, and there translated a great part of the Shastah, informs us that the name Bramah is derived from Bram, spirit, and Mab, powerful. "This name, he says, "the Indians give to the author of the Shastah, by which they denote his spirituality, and the divimity of his mission and doctrine. Hence his successors are called Bramins, in order to shew that they have inherited his divine spirit." It is well known that the name Abraham comes from Ab, father, Ram, elevated, and Hammon, multitude. There is therefore no other similitude between Bramah and Abraham than that of sound. Edit.

fpirit. Therefore, it is probable, that these two names are very different both in derivation and fenfe to contact nombo son aven noy one probably you have text proofs; let us led

" The Indians called their God Brama, and " their Priefts Bramins, or Brachmans." (Philosophical Dictionary.) sidt tallt emost il Abraham, is one of the moft common

". Al lo sacitat Comment t stieres sacran "

(Windle of Life or the control of t

Well! does it follow that because the words Brama and Brachman have some similitude to that of Abraham, that Abraham and Brama are the same thing? Does this reasoning become you, fir, who have so often ridiculed the Huets and Bocharts, for building sometimes on refemblances of names? and wolf an Indian name, the one fignifies high fa-

there of a multirale Text, starthum a to rest

loux et. "This people (the Indians) whom we ac-" count one of the earliest nations, make of " their Brama a fon of God, who instructed " the Bramas in the manner of worshipping " him; the veneration paid to this name " passed quickly from one people to another. "The Arabians, Caldeans, Persians took it "up, and the Jews looked upon him as one " of their patriarchs."

-A costic or service duci ered . Combine teles . The minister bedreten Haman and Abres and their street about of "The Arabians, who traded with the In"dians, were probably the first who had some
"confused ideas of Brama, whom they called
"Abrama, and from whom they afterwards
"boasted of descending." (Philosophy of History.)

Smalled and drive Comments sensiber 2 and Pres

This, fir, is a noble explanation of the Indian derivation of the name of Abraham, and of the rout he took from India to Palleftine!

Yet you must indulge us in making some reflexions here. To appear need over bloom it

The Indians whom we account one of the earliest nations, &c. When you account the Indians one of the earliest nations, sir, you may be right, but when you make them, in another place, the most ancient of all nations, you are probably wrong.

Make of their Brama a son of God, &c. Sometimes then it seems they make him their God, sometimes a son of God, who instructed them in the way of worshipping him. We allow it, but how long is it since the Indians make of their Brama a son of God? Are you very sure that this belief of the Indians was prior to the writings of the Hebrews? Please to produce your proofs, sir,

The

by from one people to another. No one doubts that the name of Abraham passed quickly thre's the East; but one might reasonably doubt that this veneration began in India.

The Arabians, who traded with the Indians, were probably the first, &c. Might we ask you first why should the Arabians have traded in India before the Persians, who were so very near to India? You can certainly answer this question.

It would have been more to the advantage of your fystem if they had distinct ones. Conyour fystem if they had distinct ones. Conyour fystem if they had distinct ones. Conand not very fit for clearing up a question of the carliest nations, sir, you

ri Some confused ideas of Brama, subon they called Abrama. Nothing more probable truly! The derivation of these two words, as we have shewn, leads directly to this.

And from whom they afterwards boufted of descending. The Arabians have boufted and still boust of their descent from Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation. But in what Arabian author have you read, fir, that the Arabians ever boasted of their descent from the Brahma of the Indians?

approduce your proofs, fir.

The

The Caldeans, the Perfians, appropriated it to themselves. Still affertions and no proofs, But you fay, and ond; anaihn and more et os Some metring motion Text. It out Washing

fire into your head, you woodably staff if "The name of the Indian priefts, and ma-" ny facred institutions of the Indians, have " an immediate relation to the name of " Brama; but, on the other hand, among the, "Western Asiaticks, no society of men was " ever called Abramich; there is no rite or ce-" remony of that name," has villemed brock

But, fir, do you not know that an whole nation bore the name of the grandfon of Abraham? Do you not know that this people has used and still uses an extraordinary and painful rite, and that it uses it merely because it received it from Abraham?

Altho you observe very ingeniously, that

The name of the Indian priests has an immediate relation to the name of Abraham. You must mean a relation of found. Therefore Abraham was known by the Indians before he was known by the Hebrews! A fine way of reasoning! You think this one incombrehenfible: You

What, fir, are these the proofs which you oppose to the existence of Abraham, and to the descent of the Jews, confirmed by so many titles! This furely is mocking your readers indive for undertaking eraber

We

We take it for granted that you never did believe that the knowledge of Abraham came to us from the Indians, thro' the Arabians and Perfians. When this ridiculous notion came first into your head, you probably at first laughed at it, and probably you do so still. But you know your readers; you know that there are many of them who will take up with any thing. Perhaps you adopt that most philosophical principle, that it is very fair to mock fools. But pray, sir, let us hereaster have more humanity and less philosophy.

SECONDEXTRACT.

polibriare sall to oman allo syndrautics

Abraham's travels. Some small geographical mistakes, accompanied with several others. Travels into Palestine.

Altho' you observe, very ingeniously, that Abraham was fond of travelling, yet you do not seem to like his travels; you think them frange; let us see whether they are really so; and let us begin by his journey into Sichem.

You think this one incomprehensible. You cannot conceive how or why Abraham could resolve on so long and dreadful a journey. If we believe you, he must have sound unconquerable difficulties in it, and he could have no reasonable motive for undertaking it.

subserve at the difference of three hundred

Of the difficulties which Abraham had to furmount. Whether they were such as the Critick represents them.

Abraham had undoubtedly difficulties to furmeunt in removing from Haran to Sichem, and this proves the liveliness of his faith, and the willingness of his obedience. But were these difficulties infurmountable?

First, in order to judge of the length of his journey, we think it would be necessary before all things to settle from whence he set out. Now with regard to this your ideas are not clear, determinate, or just. You say,

If Abraham went, the Haran he did not go from Caldea, and if he went from Caldea

"Genesis says, that Abraham went out of "Haran after the death of Thare his father." (Philosophy of History, article Abraham.)

" After the death of his father, Abraham " left Caldea." (Ibidem.)

"It feems extraordinary that he should have quitted the fruitful country of Mesopotamia to go into the barren land of Sichem,

" chem, at the distance of three hundred " miles." (Ibidem.)

"Sichem is more than an hundred leagues "from Caldea." (Philosoph. Dict.)

Comment.

Abraham had midoubtedly difficu

tick rednescopts theme!

Genesis says that Abraham, having quitted Caldea, went to Haran with Thare his father, and that he went after from Haran to Sichem; and this is easy to conceive.

You say, sir, as we have shewn, that after the death of Thare, Abraham went out of Haran, and that he left Caldea. That he left Caldea, and that he went from Mesopotamia. Now all this cannot be easily conceived.

If Abraham went from Haran he did not go from Caldea, and if he went from Caldea we ought not to say merely that he went from Mesopotamia. Do you consound Caldea with Mesopotamia? This is just as if you confounded that part of France called the island of France with the kingdom of France, and as if you said, to go from France, that is, from the island of France. When distances are to be ascertained, there ought to be more exactness and precision in terms, of simplest

But

But you will say, what matter whether A-braham went from Caldea or Mesopotamia, he had still a long way to travel. How far then?

Text.

" leagues."

Comment.

An bundred leagues! Frightful distance, shocking journey! How could be go an hundred leagues!

But, fir, altho' an hundred leagues frighten you, for a wandering family, accustomed to live under tents, and to change their habitations frequently, yet an hundred leagues might not make so dreadful a journey as you think.

Besides, is it very certain that there was the distance of one hundred leagues from Haran to Sichem? If you are sure of this, you certainly know where Haran lay. Yet you tell us,

never the chief work at the cover of the

mine the salence between 2 to place a them ?

"Out of seventy-five systems formed up-"on the history of Abraham, there is not one

" that tells us exactly what this town or ham-

" let of Haran is, or where it lies." (Questions fur l'Encyclopedie.)

Comments

he had fill a long way to to

It is true that commentators and geogra-phers are much divided with regard to the fituation of the town or hamlet of Haran which is also called Charan.

Some think it is the city of Carres in Mefopotamia, famous for the defeat of Craffus others, another city called Carres, near Tadmor or Palmyra; and some, a third city of Carres, in the neighbourhood of Damascus.

As for you, fir, you have not the least doubt or uncertainty with respect to this point of geography. You know more of the matter than all the commentators and geographers together; or rather, with no more knowledge than they have, you begin confidently by affirming that there were more than three bundred miles, or one hundred leagues, from Haran to Sichem. Might we not justly think a man too bold, who pretends to determine the distance between two places, without knowing the fituation of one of them? But here follows another difficulty attending the patriarch. The standard of model of the " that tells not the what that the thirty light

Text.

"He had wildernesses to go thro' in his way to Sichem." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

Comment.

That depends, fir, on the place you make him go from, and the road you make him take.

If he was to go at this day straight from Caldea to Sichem, he would have wilds to pass thro'; and perhaps there were such too in the time of Abraham.

But in going from Haran, even the Haran beyond the Euphrates, it was not unavoidable to pass the wilds. Abraham might have gone to Apamia, Emesus, Damascus; from Damascus he might have passed over to Sidon, from Sidon to Carmel, and from Carmel to Sichem. Or he might have gone a still shorter way, from Damascus to the sources of Jordan, from thence to the lake of Tiberias, and from this lake, thro' rich and fruitful plains to Sichem. There are no wilds here, sir.

Now, it is not only possible that Abraham went this way; but it is highly probable, for Genesis says, that he went, not from Caldea, but from Haran, and it was a tradition even among

among Pagans, that (1) he reigned, or rather resided, some time at Damascus. Therefore these wilds which seare your imagination, are not to be found in this journey.

But here is a new difficulty attending the patriarch.

Show a server of the west Text of the shows in the Tax

"The Caldean tongue must have been wery different from that of Sichem; it was not a place of trade." (lbidem.)

Comment

The Caldean tongue must have been very different from, &c. Who told you this, and what proofs have you of it? None; and we shall shew hereafter that these two languages were not near so different as you think them.

It was not a place of trade, &c. No; but Abraham was not looking for a place of trade, he was looking for pasturage; and mount Carmel, the plain of Esdraelon, &c. and all the places about Sichem supplied him with excellent

(1) He reigned or resided, &c. Genesis confirms this tradition; it implies pretty clearly that Abraham lived sometime at Damascus, where it says in one place that Eliezer was of Damascus, and in another place that he was born in Abraham's house. This observation is taken from the learned Bishop of Clogher. Edit.

lent pastures. Abraham was a shepherd, and why do you talk to us of places of trade?

ecaufe the country he was quitting

Whether Abraham had any reasonable motive for undertaking this journey.

But in short, you say, what motives could engage him to undertake such a journey?

This country then might will be will be the History

"He quitted Melopotamia; he went from one country which is called idolatrous, to another idolatrous country. Why did he go to it? Why did he leave the rich banks of the Euphrates to go into fo diffant, for barren, and so stony a country as that of Sichem?"

their entermino aleftine and taking

He went into a country which is called idolatrous, &c. It was juffly called fo, for they worthipped in it the Sun, Moon, and all the hoft of Heaven, witness the idols which Thare made, according to the traditions of the Arabians, traditions which you quote and respect much,

Why did he go to it? Even if we did not know why he went, would it thence follow that

that he did not go, or that he had no reasonable motive for going?

Why? Because the country he was quitting was idolatrous; because God had still some faithful servants in that country whither he was going; in a word, as you say yourself, because it pleased God that he should go. Are these absurd motives and reasons which the human mind can hardly conceive?

Why did he leave the rich banks of the Euphrates to go to so distant a country? Would not one think that Abraham was setting out for the end of the world, or for another hemisphere?

So barren and so stony a country as that of Sichem, &c. This was the country in which the Israelites fixed their residence for some time after their entering Palestine and taking Jericho. Here the kings of Israel fixed the seat of empire, and here the Samaritans built a temple in opposition to that of Jerusalem. Would this country have been preserved to so many others, if it had been as barren in those ancient times as you make it?

Nor was it so in the time of the judicious and exact Belon. "At Naplosa," says he, which in my opinion was anciently called "Sichar or Sichem, the hills are well culti-

wated with fruit-trees, the olive-tree grows " large, the inhabitants cultivate the white " mulberry-tree for the food of worms, whose " filk they tile, figs also grow on fmall trees." The learned Ludolph also attests, that Mount Gerizim (this, fir, was the country of Sichem) was in his time very fruitful; and Maun-drell, still of later date, assures us that in the neighbourhood of Sichem, may be feen a rich and fine country, lovely hills and fruitful vallies. This country then might well have pleased Abraham. It might please at this day, if the Arabians did not infest it.

of life, at a time when they begon to have children at feventy, and when men lived to

Abraham's age when he undertook this journey.

But what surprizes you most is, that Abraham should undertake this journey at so advanced an age

his gayr of years. He was of thirty-five or forty would

o "Abraham was one hundred and thirty-five " years old when he left his country." (Quefti-" ons fur & Encyclopedie) This is a very ex-" traordinary journey undertaken at the age " of near an hundred and forty years." (Philosophical Dictionary.) " Could Abraham

Abraham was just two hundred and thir-" ty-five years old when he fet out on his (Defense de mon Onele.) Adayuna travels." Jonnment. Comment.

K 2

word with fruit trammone of vertice crows

Mben be left bis country. Probably you mean when he went from Haran, which was not bis country. The learn of bis country.

But, fir, when Abraham left Haran, he was not near an hundred and thirty-five, nor two bundred and seventy-five, (for it appears, as a proof of the exactness of your calculations, that the numbers always vary) he was but seventy-five years old

Now this age of feventy-five, was the bloom of life, at a time when they began to have children at feventy, and when men lived to the age of an hundred and fifty or an hundred and eighty.

Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years, so that at seventy-five he had not gone thro' half his course of years. He was then what a man of thirty-five or forty would be now. Do you think, sir, that a man of thirty-five or forty is too old to undertake a journey of an hundred leagues. But you say,

" of near an hundrated forty years." (Phi-

"Could Abraham be at the same time se"venty-five years old only and an hundred
"and thirty-five years old?" (Questions fur
l'Encyclopedie.)

Comment

Comment.

fland the passage of women, on which you

No, fir, and for this reason Genesis does not say in any place, that he was an bundred and thirty-sive years old, when he left Haran.

It says on the contrary, in plain terms, that he was then but seventy-five years old. It makes this exact observation, that long after his return into Egypt, when the Lord promised him that he should have a son within that year, he was ninety-nine years old. It says he was an hundred years old when Isaac was born.

These texts are clear; the age of Abraham is ascertained in them precisely, and in a manner that does not at all agree with the bundred and thirty-five years, which you give him when he left Haran.

sid to recy oliosrq od boxil to red flable

- " But this fame Genesis tells us, that Thare,
- " having begotten Abraham at the age of fe-
- " venty, lived till he was two hundred and
- "five years old, and that Abraham did not go
- " from Haran 'till after his father's death. A-
- " braham must therefore have been at that "time just an hundred and thirty-five years
- " old." (Philosoph. Dict. and Philos, of Hist.)

bluow rawles adT Comment.

This Argument supposes that you under-

stand the passage of Genesis, on which you rest your evidence, well. Now this may be contested,

Genesis says, Thare lived three-score and ten years, and he begat Abraham, Nachor, and Haran. Hence you inser that Abraham was the eldest brother, and that he was born exactly in the seventieth year of Thare's life; this inference is by no means satisfactory; for Genesis says the same of Noah, that he begot three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and yet Shem was not the oldest, but Japhet.

We might then answer you, that it is false, or at least doubtful, that by these words, Thare lived three-score and ten years, and be begot Abraham, &c. Genesis means that he was the eldest brother, or fixed the precise year of his birth.

(1) We might answer you besides, that the passage of the vulgar Hebrew text, in which Thare is said to have lived two hundred and five years, is contradicted by the Samaritan text, which gives Thare only one hundred and forty-five years of life. And this reading agrees exactly

⁽t) We might answer you besides. This answer would be satisfactory, but our Jewish authors would probably be unwilling to allow that the Samaritan text is more exact than the Hebrew. Christ.

exactly with the other numbers, and takes away all appearance of contradiction.

Therefore most of your learned men prefer this reading to that of the vulgar Hebrew text, which they think has been altered by the copiers in this place. This is the opinion of Bochart, Knatchbull, Clayton, Houbigant.

What do you do then, fir, in order to shew that Abraham was very old when he undertook these journies? You judge of his time by your own, and you oppose a doubtful or false argument, with a text probably falsified, to four or five clear and express passages. You would undoubtedly shew more impartiality if a profane author was in question; you would explain the obscure passage by those which are clear and precise; this is the practice of all criticks. Is it unreasonable to require the same equity from you?

Upon the whole then, sir, the difficulties which Abraham might have met with in his journey, were not insurmountable; he had reasonable and strong motives for undertaking it; he was not too old for such undertakings. Therefore it is not a thing beyond conception that he undertook and executed it.

Would you have

blicos are not 40 from Gaza to Such

DAIH Tours vifited by famine, while he

THIRDEXTRACT

Continuation of Abraham's travels. His jour-

The journey of which we have been speaking, was followed by another, which you think as strange, because thro' heedlessness you do not form juster ideas to yourself of it, than you did of the preceding one.

by your owngand you oppose a doubtful or false argument, with a text probably falsissed,

to four or five clean and crotch passes. You would undown sinchand more imparti-

ality if a profance author was in quedion;

"He is scarcely arrived in the little mountainous country of Sichem, when famine drives him out of it; he goes to Egypt to look for food. (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

journey, were not the member the had

He is scarcely arrived. He had been there perhaps a year or more, but no matter;

He goes to Egypt to look for food. Very furprizing indeed! Would you have had him flay in a country visited by famine, whilst he could could remove into a neighbouring one which had corn? But, and a not a flat that only

You make Abraham let out from Sichem,

There are two hundred leagues from Sichem to Memphis; is it natural that a man flould go look for bread at fuch a distance, in a country of which he does not under-fland the language? These are ftrange travels." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

where they were furnementing i

There are two bundred leagues from Sichem to Memphis. Not quite, fir; they reckon scarcely more than an hundred and thirty (1) or an hundred and forty. You have only made the distance one third more, a small mistake!

This absence of mind which you had when you wrote your Philosophical Dictionary, continued on you when you wrote your Philosophy

(1) Or 140. We form a judgment of this by the relation of Belon, who was but ten days performing this journey, altho' he fays in his time there was an extraordinary bad road between Cairo and Jerusalem. Now it is well known that from Cairo to Memphis, there are but three small leagues. It has been observed also in the book called Defence of the Books of the Old Testament, that father Eugene, who travelled into that country, reckons but 100 leagues from Cairo to Gaza, and that there are not 40 from Gaza to Sichem. Aut.

phy of History. Indeed, fire your absent fits, altho' light, last a long time.

You make Abraham set out from Sichem, but he had already left Sichem; he had lived some time at Bethel, and had advanced towards the southern frontier of Palestine, when he set out for Egypt. Do you know, sir, that the distance from thence to Egypt, did not exceed twenty or thirty leagues? Was it not natural to go and seek for bread so near home, where they were sure of getting it?

It was so natural to have recourse to Egypt in this circumstance, that Isac drew near to it again, and that Jacob sent his children this ther on a like occasion.

This is not all; Genesis says that Abraham went to Egypt, which is easy to conceive. But you send him to Memphis, sir, which is indeed very extraordinary.

But who told you that Abraham was at Memphis? Who told you that Memphis was then the capital of Egypt? Or even that it existed in the time of Abraham? There are some reasons for doubting it. Tamis only is known by our ancient writers. Homer, who speaks of Thebes, says nothing of Memphis, and Isaiah, of all the Hebrew authors, is the first that mentions it. If Memphis had been

the capital of Egypt, in Abraham's time, would our writers have been filent on that head until (1) Isaiah?

In a country of which he does not understand the language. But how can you tell, sir, but Abraham did understand this language? Perhaps this language did not differ so much then from the Hebrew language, as it has done since. And besides was it impossible to find an interpreter?

The mind of man may then without so much trouble comprehend the reasons of such a journey.

§ 2.

Abraham's conduct in Egypt. A scandalous imputation of the illustrious writer.

Christians have been for a long time divided with regard to Abraham's conduct in Egypt. Some have said, (2) with a view of justifying

(i) Isaiab. These reasons may be found at full length in Bochart's answer to the poet St. Amand. Bochart maintains in it, that Memphis did not exist in the time of Moses, or at least was not the capital of Egypt. Aut.

(2) With a view of justifying him. Out of the great number of those who justify or excuse Abraham, we shall mention but one, the learned and moderate Waterland.

justifying him, that he did not violate truth in calling himself the brother of Sarah, as she really was his fifter; that by this conduct he referved to himself the right of watching her conduct; that he gained time by this, and had reason to flatter himself, that during this interval, providence, which had conducted him into those parts, would make something intervene to deliver him out of his critical fituationogmi at any abilited but A . son't

intural to so and feet for brind \$301710101111 us (1) Others more fevere, have loudly condemned him for having equivocated with Pharoah, and rashly exposed Sarah's chastity.

It

He maintains, in his work in which he defends the scripture against Tindal, that Abraham did nothing on this occasion unworthy of a wife and good man; that he could reasonably rely on Sarah's fidelity, if the king of Egypt had any sparks of virtue; that if Abraham had acted otherwise, and acknowledged Sarah for his wife, he would have foolifhly exposed his life, without making ber honour more secure; that altho' we are forbid to lie, yet we are not obliged to tell all truths, especially to a ravither and a murderer, who would make this difgovery subservient to his base ends, the destruction of the innocent, &c. Waterland here rests on the authority of Alexander, to whom he refers his readers. See Natalis Alexander, vol. I. page 202, &c. Aut.

(1) Others more fevere. Of this number are Origen, Jerom, Calvin, and many others, both ancient and mothat memon but one, the learned and moderate. Arish

(1) It was referved for you, fir, to impute to this holy man the lowest and basest intention. Your accusation amounts to this that he attempted to make a base traffick of his " that my life may be preferr tusad s'aliw

Text.

As the was a fine woman he resolved to " profit by her beauty." (Philosoph. Dictibit death, which he thinks inevitable, that he

requests Sarah, n.tnemmon .. but to Lav that

the was his filter, (So weighty a charge against a man who has been revered for so many ages, and by so many nations for his piety and virtue, would require the strongest proofs. Produce your's, They are nothing but base suggestions, and a scandalous alteration of the text of scripture. If we are to believe you, fir, Abbraham faid to Sarah, Hyde, Waterland, exc. where that frie

Lot, the daughter of Haray and confequently the niece and not the fifter of the man. These learned men ground their opinion on this, that Sarah is called in Ge-" Feign that you are my fifter, that they " may do me good on your account." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

Therefore Don Calmet is not the first, nor the only But in Genefit, Abraham speaks thus to Sarah, "You are handfome yd when the

lagacity are univertally are nowledged, whiches that pur-(2) It was referred for you. No it was not; for every thing that the illustrious writer fays, is only Bayle and Tindal's objections warmed up again. Edit.

"Egyptians shall see you, they will say, this "is the wife of that man, and they will kill "me. Say then, I pray you, that you are "my sister, that I may be well treated, and "that my life may be preserved thro' your "means."

You see then, it is not with a view of profiting by his wife's beauty, but to escape from death, which he thinks inevitable, that he requests Sarah, not to feign, but to say that she was his sister, (1) as she really was. Cen-

bluow out in bis piety and virtue daughter of his father, and not of his mother, as Abraham fays.

However, altho' we allow with the crowd of Rabbins, that Sarah was the daughter of Thare by a different wife from Abraham's mother, yet we acknowledge that many learned Jews and Christians, Jarchi, Pole, Wells, Patrick, Hyde, Waterland, &c. assert that she was the sister of Lot, the daughter of Haran, and consequently the niece and not the sister of Abraham. These learned men ground their opinion on this, that Sarah is called in Genesis Thare's daughter in-law, and that in the style of scripture, the terms brother and sister often signify no more than close relationship. Hence it happens that Lot, Abraham's nephew, is called his brother.

Therefore Don Calmet is not the first, nor the only one who has held that Sarah was Abraham's niece. This supposition is by no means so ridiculous as Mr. de Voltaire thinks, and his charge against Don Calmet is very illiberal. Don Calmet, says he, whose judgment and sagacity are universally acknowledged, thinks that perhaps she was Abraham's niece. We see no reason for treating this learned religious in so rough a manner. His

hings du bemew enoiffeid comment,

fure him then for his timorousness, if you will blame him for his weakness, condemn him for his equivocation, but add not an imputation truly calumnious, to a severe judgment.

five full have charmes wou judge, fir, of those

But, you will fay, can a woman of fevency

ancient times, by your own. You forget that

The event foon shewed that Abraham's suspicions and fears, were but too well-grounded. The Egyptians, having seen Sarah, give notice of it to Pharaoh, and she is carried off. Upon which you say,

You are too well acquainted with syonr own history, and with the you live in, not to

"As foon as he arrives in Egypt, the king falls in love with his wife, who was feventyfive years old." (Philosophy of History.)

At he danier burn Comment. princhan enina

ed in the first same state of the series of

comment, quoted with encomiums by strangers, seems to have supplied the illustrious writer with many observations that adorn his writings, which he would probably never have known but for them. Is it out of gratitude, that he calls Don Calmet, in another place, a poor weak writer, without judgment? Such expressions were not made to be applied to Don Calmet by Mr. de Voltaire. Aut.

Philosophical Dictionary, and but fixty-five in the Questions für l'Encyclopedie. Canlyou not be consistent with yourself in speaking lupon any point to a secondarial your control and point to be a secondarial of the control of the

But, you will fay, can a woman of feventy-five still have charms? You judge, sir, of those ancient times, by your own. You forget that Sarah lived to the age of an hundred and twenty-seven years, and that she was therefore at that time, what a woman of the same of is an anoight your people. Do you think that at this age a fine woman, who had bore no children, could not have preserved her beauty sufficiently to inspire us with love? You are too well acquainted with your own history, and with the age you live in, not to know that both these could supply you (1) with several such instances.

"five years old." . (Phipolophy of History.)

Curious reasonings of the learned critick on the

fit is distressing to your readers, fir, to see a great man calumniated by a celebrated or seed a great man calumniated by a celebrated writer,

(1) With several fuch instances. Mr. de Voltaire must not forget at least what he has related of Ninon, his benefactress, and of his godsather Chatcanneus! What he says of them is an extraordinary method of immortalizing these persons whose memory is dear to him. See his Defense de mon Oncle. Edit.

writer, you foon make them amends for this, by (1) your extraordinary reasonings on the presents which Abraham received from Pharaoh. The consequences, sir, which you draw from this fact are very curious. You say first that,

copyliowever and the tradition their exercision it

"These presents were great presents, con-"siderable presents." (Philos, of Hist. and Philos Dict.)

pliment to Plaracinemno reader the cheafe

What were they then? Great fums of money, superb vases of gold and silver, rich stuffs, jewels of great value? No.

must therefore Text.

"They consisted of a great quantity of theep, oxen, he and she-asses, horses, ca"mels, male and female servants. (Philos. of History, Philosoph. Dictionary, Questions fur l'Encyclopedie.)

to make it habitable, to establish cities in it, immerife labitammod requisite; it was

When we confider the manner in which Vol. II. you

(1) Your extraordinary reasonings. We must do this justice to the illustrious writer; the reasonings which he is going to produce on these presents, belong neither to Bayle nor Tindal, &c. they are entirely his own. Aut.

you usher in these great presents, we are somewhat surprized to find them suddenly reduced to oxen, sheep, he and she asses, &c.

However, sir, you agree persectly with the scriptures here, (which seldom happens) except however in the article of horses which it does not mention, and in the expression a great quantity, which cannot be sound either in the text, or the most exact versions; but which may be added in order to pay a compliment to Pharaoh, and to render the phrase more harmonious.

Such, fir, according to you, were the great presents. Let us now see what they prove, according to you.

word the antances Text.

"These presents, which were considerable, "prove that the Pharaohs were then pretty powerful kings; the country of Egypt was already well peopled. But in order to make it habitable, to establish cities in it, immense labour was requisite; it was necessary to make the waters of the Nile flow thro a multitude of canals, and to raise these cities at least twenty seet above these canals. Probably even many great Pyramids had been built. (Questions Encyclopediques.)

"They (the presents) prove that even then Egypt was a very powerful and well civilized, and consequently a very ancient kingdom. (Philosophical Dictionary.)

"They prove that even then this country " was a powerful state; monarchy was ef-" tablished in it, the arts were cultivated. " The river had been fubdued; they had " dug canals every where to receive its inun-" dations, without which the country would " not have been habitable. Now, I would " ask any man of sense, whether it did not "require ages to found fuch an empire, in a " country which was for a long time inac-" ceffible, and laid wafte by those very wa " ters which afterwards fertilized it. We " must therefore forgive Manetho, He-" rodotus, Diodorus, Eratosthenes, for that " prodigious antiquity which they afcribe to " the kingdom of Egypt; and this antiquity " must have been very modern in comparison " of the Caldeans, and the Syrians, &c. " (Philosophy of Hiltory)." de gluesham from and oven, their

The and the affect therefore in this facking

Thus, fir, from the presents which Abraham receives from Pharaoh, you conclude, that the world is prodigiously ancient, and that the calculations of Manetho, Eratof-

on the prefents made to Atraham.

thenes, &c. are much more reasonable than those of the Jewish writers. Pharaoh gives Abraham oxen and sheep, therefore he was a very powerful monarch. He gives him be and she asses, therefore the pyramids were built; therefore the Hebrew writers are very ignorant, when they affert that the world is but six or seven thousand years old. These ideas are new and these arguments admirable!

They have still this further advantage, when they are applied to some other person, to the king of Gerar for example, who also made a present to Abraham of oxen and sheep, they become so droll that one cannot help laughing.

Now if we were to fay; "as foon as Abra"ham arrived at Gerar, in the shocking wilder"ness of Cades, his wife was taken from him
"by the king of that country, therefore that
"country was very well governed. The king
"gives him sheep and oxen, therefore the king
"was a very powerful monarch. He gives him
"he and she asses, therefore in this shocking
"wilderness trade flourished, and manufactures
"did abound; therefore they had built cities,
"and conquered the barrenness of the soil, &c.
"therefore the world is very ancient." Would
not you, sir, be the first to laugh at these
our

our arguments? Nay, they would make you burst with laughter! Forgive us then if we laugh a little at your's.

It is surprizing, fir, that you did not see that these presents of the king of Egypt prove exactly the contrary of what you want to prove. If the king of Egypt gives asses and sheep to Abraham, this is the present of the chief (1) of an infant-colony, to another chief such as himself. If he gives him slaves, Romulus would have done so too, when he was king of a village and had plundered some neighbouring villages.

Monarchy was established in Egypt, the arts were therefore cultivated, &c. If you know no countries where monarchy is, or has been established without the cultivation of the arts presently or formerly, you have read but little, or have forgot much. Do you think then, that the arts were cultivated in the ages of Romulus and Evander? Do you think they are cultivated in all the clans of African negroes, and in all the savage colonies of America which have kings? You have often said

have been hibdued, that cities and Pyrainids

⁽¹⁾ Of an infant-colony. We do not deem the kings of Egypt at that time, to have been merely the chiefs of an infant-colony; we have an higher idea of them; but we have not formed it from Mr. de Voltaire's reasonings on the presents made to Abraham. Aut.

faid that they never were cultivated amongst the Jews where monarchy was established.

They had dug canals every where, without which the country would not have been habitable. What, Egypt would not have been habitable if they had not dug canals every where! We must suppose, fir, that the Egyptians had some habitations before they dug these canals every where!

We conceive that without these canals that part of the country which the Nile overflowed could not have been inhabited during the inundation. But we conceive also, that the inhabitants might live on the borders, and that as soon as the waters retired, they might till and sow the lands which the waters left dry, after manuring them.

We conceive again that the inhabitants may have stolen ground by degrees from the inundation; that they may have dug canals and built cities twenty feet above these canals. But we conceive too that it was not absolutely necessary, that these canals should have been dug every where, that the river should have been subdued, that cities and Pyramids should have been built to enable a king of Egypt to give Abraham oxen and sheep.

Now I would ask any man of sense, &c. And we, sir, would ask any man of judgment, nay yourself, sir, whether this is a rational conclusion, because the king of Egypt gave he and she asses to Abraham, therefore the Pyramids were built, and the world is exceedingly ancient. Could any man lay such arguments before his readers, if he did not suppose them to be so many (1) beads of cabbage?

Thus, fir, a distance ill-determined, a false accusation, misplaced raillery, and ridiculous arguments, in a sew words, make up the whole of your difficulties on Abraham's travels into Egypt. Do you still find these arguments solid, and the travels inconceivable?

FOURTH EXTRACT

Other travels of Abraham. Other mistakes.

Let us proceed and examine impartially the history of Abraham and of his travels. The remainder of them feems to you no less extraordinary than the beginning? we must endeavour

Wande ing between Munt Carmel, Sc.

⁽¹⁾ Heads of cabbage. This is Mr. de Voltaire's expression, which probably our authors would not have used, if he had not dignified it by using it before them. Edit.

endeavour to make you comprehend this part too mabe it man of bloom of on

nay yourfelf, fir, whether this is a rational conclution, thecaste. I've king of Egypt give

wand the affects to Abraham, therefore, the Abraham pursues the four kings and defeats roof yel nam yas libem. Janing ylanibara arguments before his neaders, in he didenot

That Abraham purfued four kings, that he overtook, attacked and beat them, these are, if we believe you, a number of facts above all conception. Let us fee first whether you give a true account of this matter. are more than a few syards, make up the

ent a underda ao Text vilia nov de stolo

vels into Egypt. The you will find thefe are Abraham, at his return from Egypt, is " represented as a wandering shepherd, be-" tween Mount Carmel, and the Afphalted " lake.) This is the most burning defert of " Arabia Petræa." (Philosophy of History, " article Abraham.)

odt plicit romi an Comment. s bassong at 13.1

hiftgry of Abrabam and of his travels. . The Abraham is represented as a wandering shepberd. Granted nuised sil nach yworksond

relationed on vour

Wandering between Mount Carmel, &c. In Palestine there were two Mounts Carmel, the first, towards the fouth-west, the other, towards the fouth-east, at present near the Afphaltit Afphaltit lake, (1) which you always call Afphalted. Probably you mean to speak of this latter Carmel

This is the most burning desert of Archia Petraa. Every one does not place, as you do, those parts which are between this Mount Carmel and the Asphaltit lake; in Arabia Petraa, they are generally supposed to be in Judea, in Palestine.

walled delegables towns and Sedom - Lot is 2dly, It is true that these places are now most burning; but were they so when Abraham returned from Egypt? This is the point in question, and it is what you do not, and cannot prove. Confider, fir, that there was then no Afphaltit lake. All that space which it now takes up was still a fine fruitful country, and watered with good waters. Are you fure that the dreadful catastrophe, which changed this fine country into a bituminous lake, caused no alterations in the neighbouring lands? We think that an alteration may justly be prefumed. The very name of Carmel denotes a place abounding in pasturage, and which, for this reason, suited Abraham and his numerous flocks. Certainly, fir, whilst you were writing all this, you had in smolths milialized, 1st the feripture mentions

⁽¹⁾ Which you always call Afphalted. The name of this lake comes from the Greek which fays Afphaltit, and thus the Accademy of Belles Lettres speaks. Aut.

fome degree lost fight of the period of Abraham's return, and of the dreadful event just mentioned which ruined this country.

reside of Text. Home sale of steeling

- "A king of Babylon, a king of Persia, a king of Pontus, and a king of several other nations, form a league to make war against "Sodom and four neighbouring little towns, they take these towns and Sodom. Lot is their prisoner.
- " It is hard to conceive how five kings, so great and so powerful, formed a league to come thus to attack a clan of Arabians in fuch a wild corner of the earth." (Ibidem.)

erdy weeks this town Comment. a bounders bring you

Let us aim at truth, fir, without endeavouring to mislead our readers.

It is certain that it would be hard to conceive that five great and powerful kings, would have formed a league against five little towns. But in the first place, you reckon five kings. We beg leave to tell you, that you are mistaken, for the scripture mentions only four.

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Wedge an always out I had

You

You afterwards make these four kings great kings, powerful monarchs. This, sir, it is incumbent on you to prove, and how could you prove it? You can judge of their power only by the sacred writings. Now according to the text of our scriptures, these kings, whom you call kings of Babylon, Persia, &c. were (1) a king of Sinhar, a king of Elam, (2) a king of Ellasar, and a king of Goim. But what were Elam, Sinhar, Ellasar, &c. were they large populous countries?

(1) A king of Sinbar. Hyde, whom Mr. de Voltaire has either read or not read, but whom he quotes and esteems, does not, as he does, make of this king of Sinhar, a king of Babylon, but a king of the city of Sinhar, placed according to him, at the foot of Mount Singarus, of which Pliny speaks. Rex Sinhar non in Caldæa seu Babylonia, sed Sinhar in Mesopotamia, quæ urbs ad radices Montis Singaræ; de quo Plinius. Others make him king of the country of Senaar where Babylon, according to Mr. de Voltaire, who seldom is consistent with himself, was not yet built. Edit.

a beraupines badiyed

(2) A king of Ellasar. The learned English commentator Patrick, places Ellasar in Celesyria, where accordingly he finds a city called Ellas. The king of Goim was according to him, the chief of some Arabian clans near Celesyria. These three kings were vassals of the king of Elam or Elymais, Chederlaomer, who is believed by some to have been the Ninyas of profane authors

However, altho' we can have nothing more than conjectures with respect to the situation and extent of these countries, it is plain, that at a period when population was yet so weak, a king, in order to extend his conquests, did not want such great armies as the king of Assyria and Babylon had afterwards. Edit.

This is very improbable, in those times which were so near the new-birth of the world. And if those kings had been so powerful, would the kings of five little towns have dared to meet them in pitched battle?

We must add that Chederlaomer and his allies had not formed a league merely against Sodom and the four other little towns, but against all the nations in the neighbourhood of Jordan; against the Rephaim, the Emim, the Horians, the Amorites, &c. and it was not till after they had conquered all these nations, that they came and attacked the king of Sodom and his allies, who had been subdued twelve years before by the king of Elam, but had shaken off the yoke, and refused to pay him tribute.

In short, sir, whilst you make the four kings of Sinhar, Elam, &c. powerful monarchs, you change the five cities of Pentapolis into five little towns; you make of their inhabitants a clan of Arabians, and of their country a wild corner of the earth. But upon what foundation all this, I pray you?

This country, according to our scriptures, was a delicious valley, covered with groves, and watered as Egypt was, or as the garden of the Almighty! It was not then at that time

Allyria and Babylon had alterwards. Edit.

s, did not wantlinch et at armiet as the anglot

COMMENTARY.

157

time a wild country, and you confound different periods here again very injudiciously.

Even prophane authors, speaking of this country, from ancient traditions, represent it as beautiful and fruitful. But without allowing it to have had great cities, as (1) Tacitus does, without reckoning up thirteen such with Strabo, without believing that the ruins of Sodom, which, he says, were seen in his time, covered the space of seventy-two surlongs in circumference, we may safely pronounce that Sodom, Gomorrah, &c. were something better than little towns.

There is therefore reason to think, that when you represent the four allied kings as great kings and powerful monarchs, Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. as little towns, and this whole country as a wild corner of the earth, you avail yourself of that liberty which is allowed to poets, and that you have not scrupulously adhered to exact truth. But you say,

and abeatally and Text.

" It is hard to conceive how Abraham dif-" comfited fuch powerful monarchs, with three hundred

⁽¹⁾ Tacitus does. Haud procul inde campi, quos ferunt olim uberes magnisque urbibus babitatos fulminum jutil arsisse & manere vestigia. Histor. lib. 5. Aut.

" hundred country fervants, or how he pur-" fued them, even beyond Damascus. Some

" translators have put Dan for Damascus; but

" there was no fuch place as Dan in the time " of Moses, much less in that of Abraham.

" There are above three hundred miles from

" the extremity of the Asphalted Lake, where " Sodom flood, to Damascus. All this is above

" our conception." (Philosophy of History.)

dominational cutions ware food in his time. ai asserted over Comment. saco el barovo.

If you cannot conceive, fir, how Abraham discomfited the four kings, and pursued them to Damascus, is it not again your own fault ? agift of with a substant laise is d'Il

There are above three hundred miles, you fay, from the extremity of the Asphalted Lake, where Sodom stood, to Damascus. You know then exactly where Sodom stood? We wish you joy of this discovery, sir. Hitherto the most learned geographers have been divided on this point. Some placed Sodom, as you do, at the extremity of the Lake, others a little higher, several at the entrance of it, near the mouth of the river Jordan; all agree that its fituation is very uncertain, and your learned countryman Danville, not knowing where to place it, had refolved not to infert it at all in his map. Thanks to the discoveries which you have made, fir, in geography, as B manure officent. Histor, lib. 5. Aut.

well as in all other sciences, these uncertainties have vanished; the position of Sodom is no longer doubtful, it stood at the extremity of (1) the Asphalted Lake.

Now, from the extremity of the Asphalted Lake to Damascus, there were more than three bundred miles. Are you very certain of this? We form some doubt of it, because in another place you fay more than one bundred miles. Certainly there is some difference between more than three hundred miles and more than one hundred miles. Perhaps the printer has added the word three to one of your texts, or omitted it in the other. Or is this one of your usual absences of mind? Between ourselves, fir, three hundred miles is much, one hundred miles is very little. The truth is, that the distance might be about two hundred miles. And could not you fay for the a mission was the property of these

But no matter where Sodom stood, and what was the distance from Sodom to Damas-cus. Abraham did not go from Sodom, but from the valley of Mambré, where he lived.

might without a miracle.

⁽¹⁾ The Asphalted Lake. It would be proper however that Mr. de Voltaire should condescend to prove this, were it only that he might have the credit of instructing Mr. Danville in geography, and of making this squeamish learned man determine the question about the position of Sodom. Edit.

Now from this valley to Dan, where he came up with the enemythere are about fifty leagues. Is it inconceivable that Abraham should go fifty leagues, to rescue a beloved nephew from the chains under which he groaned? Is it inconceivable that this small party should, after some days march, overtake another, which besides its own baggage, dragged after it a considerable booty in slaves and cattle? Truly, sir, if this is above your conception, your conception is rather narrow.

What aftonishes you most is, that Abraham should have defeated four kings with three bundred country fervants. But we think, fir, that three hundred country fervants, hardened by labour, trained to the use of arms, and accustomed to defend their flocks against wild beafts and robbers, were a very fit party for fuch an exploit; especially if we add to them, as it feems we ought to do, Abraham's three allies, Mambré, Aner and Escol, with perhaps two or three hundred of their followers. We think that such a party, divided into feveral bodies, falling fuddenly by night, and from different quarters, on an army whom fleep, and that fecurity which victory inspires, left defenceless, might, without a miracle, foread defolation and terror among them; and after having routed them, might also without a miracle, drive them fifteen or twenty leagues beyond the field of battle; there anohoz 36 anis is nothing miraculous or impossible here. Profane and sacred history, both ancient and modern, supply us with many instances of such defeats.

You say, sir, that some translators have put Dan instead of Damascus. These translators then have made a mistake, because the text says, that Abraham, having deseated the four kings at Dan, pursued them to Hoba, on the lest of Damascus; and that Hoba was really near Damascus and not Dan. Never mind these translators, sir, the text is in question, not translations.

You add, that there was no fuch place as Dan in the time of Moses, much less in the time of Abraham. It is true that in the time of Abraham, and even in that of Moses, the city of Dan did not bear that name which it got from the Danites. But does it follow that this place did not yet exist, because the Danites had not yet given their name to it? The meaning then of this verse is, that Abraham overtook the enemy at that place, which was afterwards (1) called Dan, and that when Vol. II.

⁽¹⁾ Called Dan. Mr. de Voltaire may conclude from this, that the name of Dan was added to the text long after Moses. Even if we did allow it, we do not think that he could take any advantage by this conclusion. We have already said that it is very clear that some of

he had defeated him there, he purfued him to the neighbourhood of Damascus. Is this too above your conception?

§. 2.

Abrabam's Journey to Gerar.

text tays, that A had test having defeated the

"Abraham, who loved to travel, went to the dreadful wilderness of Cades, at the age of one hundred and fixty years, with his wife who was ninety. A king of this wilderness failed not to fall in love with Sarah, as the king of Egypt had done before. The father of the faithful told the same lie he had done in Egypt; he gave out that his wife was his fifter, and in confequence received as before, oxen, male and female fervants." (Philosoph. Dict.)

Comment.

Abraham who loved to travel, &c. Had you attended a little more, fir, to the periods and chain of the events of which you are fpeaking,

the prophets or publick writers have added explanatory notes to the text of scripture. They probably also sub-stituted some modern names to some ancient proper ones, because the former were better known in their days. Aut.

ing, you would probably have feen that A-braham had another motive for retiring to Gerar, besides the pleasure of travelling.

He had just been witness to the most formidable spectacle; a shower of fire, torrents of fulphur and of burning bitumen, had confumed the five cities and all their guilty inhabitants. Instead of a fruitful, lovely valley, Abraham had nothing before his eyes but a frightful lake, from whence offensive and peftiferous vapours were exhaled to a great diftance; burning ashes covered all the neighbouring lands. Is it extraordinary that Abraham, who, according to you, wandered between Mount Carmel, and this now dreadful spot, should have removed far from this dismal habitation? And is it not reasonable to believe, that it was on this account, and not because he loved to travel, that he changed his residence? You must allow, sir, that if you have the talent of raillery, yet you do not always know how to place your jefts properly.

To the dreadful wilderness of Cades. We do not affert that this wilderness was a fine country; but if you represent it as absolutely barren, as we have told you before, fir, you are mistaken; it was interspersed with grass, forcess, and mountains; pasturage and fruitful land was, in some spots, to be found. That of Cades, in particular, was sultivated, M 2 planted

planted with palm-trees, and abounding in torn; for this last reason Isaac retired to it in time of famine; and it is not improbable that the destruction which happened at Sodom was followed by some kind of scarcity, and that this scarcity was the motive that sent Abraham to Gerar.

You make him one bundred and fixty years old when Sarah was but ninety. This is an error which you perfift in repeating. No, fir, Abraham was not then one hundred and fixty years old, he was but one hundred. The feripture fays it plainly.

timed the five cities and all their guilty inha-

Failed not to fall in love with Sarah, &c. We grant that it is not common for a woman of ninety to cause love; but, as you very well observe, Sarah was then pregnant; the same miracle which enabled her to be a mother, and to suckle a child, might, or rather must have given her the charms of youth. A woman in the weakness and wrinkles of old age cannot bear children. The return of Sarah's beauty was therefore less assonishing than her pregnancy.

The father of the faithful told the fame lie, &c. You make no difference then between lying and equivocating. We do not justify the latter, and yet we think that these two things should not be confounded. May it not not be justly said, that when Abraham is in question, your morality has more severity than justness, rebreak and beauty and any analysis and beauty and any or mode of well

In consequence received as before, &c. You fee, fir, that Pharach, was not the only one who made great presents; the king of a wilderness, as well as he, gave sheep and oxen. Was this king of a dreadful wilderness, a great king and a powerful monarch also?

Upon the whole, when we reflect on the noble difinterestedness with which Abraham, after his victory over the sour kings, resulted, notwithstanding the king of Sodom's request, to accept any share of the spoils which he had rescued from the enemy, must we not reject with indignation the shocking charge you make against him; to most red of the

These are therefore some small mistakes in what you say of Abraham's victory, and of his journey to Gerar, which ought to be corrected.

have (1) often already sepented at there is not Top Infe it

Promises made to Abraham,

You have neglected, fir, a very favourable opportunity, and a very easy method of rendering

dering your Questions Encyclopediques the most interesting part of your works. You might have turned the alphabetical order you follow in them to your profit, by reviewing fuccoffively and coolly your ideas and affertions on that immensity of subjects which you have treated in By this means those questions, perhaps the last work which you will have time to publish, would have become an ufeful, necessary, and consequently a very valuable errata, fit to be placed at the end of all your works. This modest and scrupulous diffidence of your own talents would have pleafed the world; they would have admired that noble spirit of generolity which confesses its mistakes and even your enemies must have allowed that you had a regard for truth reject with indignation the thecking charge

But so far from retracting your former errors, you repeat them perpetually almost in every article, and add new ones to them.

Thus the article Abraham, which is now before us, is but a repetition of what you have (1) often already repeated; there is nothing new in it but what is foreign to it, and a little objection besides, copied again from

⁽¹⁾ Often already repeated. It must be allowed that for a long time this illustrious writer has done nothing more than repeat not only what others have said, but also what he has said himself more than once, He is perpetually repeating. Edit.

from Tindal. The fubject is the promises made to Abraham. If we are to believe you fome bold criticks affert, that these promises were fallacious, and that God did not fulfil his engagements. They fay, " unto the felt will I gied the louds And altho" in the 1 ath chapte of de lays afterwards to

"The Lord appeared to Abraham and faid " to him, for all the land which thou feelt, " to thee will I give it, and to thy feed for " ever." In Sempiternum, (Genefis 1 3th.)

" The Lord by another eath promises him " afterwards, every thing that lies between " the Nile and the Euphrates." (Ibidem ch. 15.) Questions fur l'Encyclopedie, article transfed full oWhere is the necellity-madardA

"descrice manual brothers affices here which

the even children have by hear? Are not there a What shall we conclude from these pasfages, fir? Shall we fay that this land was promised and given to Abraham, to enjoy it himself? Some free-thinkers have afferted this: but see what the celebrated (1) Abbé Fourmont fays of it; "this affertion, he fays with " fpirit, arises merely from ignorance of the corruption ment. And therefore, your bold

icks do not go fo far. They only alk (1) Abbe Fourment. This is taken from his Moneaub or Girdle of Sorrow, a work in which this learned professor of Arabick attacks violently the affertion of Abbé d'Asfeld, who entirely, without the finister intention of the free-thinkers, had broached this opinion. Christ,

4 seriptures. No, God had not given this land " to Abraham, he had promifed it to him, and "that for his posterity. The promise is clearly expressed in the 12th chapter of Genesis, " And the Lord appeared unto Abraham and faid, " unto thy feed will I give this land. And altho' " in the 13th chapter, God fays afterwards to " Abraham, I will give it to thee, and to thy feed " for ever; yet the fense of the promise is de-" termined, and the accomplishment of it fixed " to a certain time, that is, to four hundred " years after. Know of a furety, faith he to " Abraham, that thy feed shall be a stranger in " a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, " and they shall afflict them for four bundred years. " But in the fourth generation they shall come bi-" ther again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is " not yet full. Where is the necessity, fays this " learned man, of producing passages here which " even children have by heart? Are not there a "thousand passages in the rest of the Penta-" teuch, which determine this point exactly? " And what book in the world clears up points males some free-thinkers ha " better !" but fee what the relebrated (1) Abbe Fonra

Therefore it cannot be faid that this land was given or promifed to Abraham for his own enjoyment. And therefore your bold criticks do not go fo far. They only ask,

or Girdle of Leaven, are ork in Which Die learned pro-

the free-thinkers, but broached this or west obver,

traff of Arabick account violantly the affection of Abbe-

Text

" How could God promife them that im-" mense tract of land, the country between

" the Euphrates and the river of Egypt, which

" the Jews never possessed?" (Ibidem.)

Comment.

It feems to us, fir, that David had carried his conquests (1) from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt; and that Solomon's dominions extended, with the nations which were tributary to him, from one river to the other. The Hebrews therefore possessed this immense tract, not as an inheritance; it was neither given (2) nor promised to them under this title; but as a conquest; and if this conquest was neither so complete, (3) nor so lasting as they had reason to hope, the reason of this will foon appear.

the from her bolom, as it had done the an-

(1) From the Euphrates to the river of Egypt. See Kings, 2d book, chap. 8. Chronicles, book 1st, chap. 18, &c.

come and abitance is they instruced their idola-

(2) Nor promised to them under this title. The land of Canaan only had been given to the Ifraelites as an inheritance. The scripture observes it expressly in several places. Edit.

(3) Nor so lasting. David had not yet conquered the country of the Sidonians, Tyrians, &c. And most of the tributary nations foon shook off the yoke, some of them towards the close of Solomon's reign, the others foon after. Idem.

Text.

" How could God give them that little " fpot of Palestine for ever and ever, from " which they have been driven so long a time " fince? (!bidem.)" hallow the ever of

Comment.

How! Because when promises are conditional, and that the conditions are not fulfilled by one fide, the engagement is void on the other which receives all this bobbotte are

Now all our scriptures attest, that the promiles of pollefling the land of Canaan were made conditionally to our fathers. And what elfe can be the meaning of fo many exhortations to observe the law, if they wished to remain possessions of the land; and of all those threatenings, that the earth should vomit them forth from her bosom, as it had done the ancient inhabitants, if they imitated their idolatry and their crimes?

Your criticks infift on the words, for ever, in sempiternum, to the end of all ages. We may answer them that the Hebrew words which are thus rendered, fignify only a long and indefinite space of time; there are numberless instances of this in scripture, and lo washing ingributary various four throok of the voke, tome of

foon after, Mews.

But who has told them that the revolution of ages, and the decrees of providence, may not bring about more happy times for us; and that the Jews, driven so long from their inheritance, shall never enter into it again? The light of Israel is not extinct, and the hope of once more seeing their darling country in a flourishing state, still lives in their hearts.

In a word, the promise of possessing the land of Canaan was conditional; it was made to Abraham only for his posterity; his descendants possessed this land of promise for a long time; the terms of the promise can signify no more; and if they did, the hope of Israel is not entirely lost. We think, sir, that these considerations are a sufficient justification of the faithfulness of God in his promises. But you say,

Lifett, nor those of the Tone of Agar and Co-

"The Lord adds to his promises, that the posterity of Abraham shall be as numerous "as the dust of the earth. So that if a "man can number the dust of the earth, then "shall thy seed also be numbered."

"Other criticks fay, that there are not four hundred thousand Jews on the face of the earth, notwithstanding that they have always looked on marriage as a fa"cred duty, and that their chief object has "always been population. We answer to "these objections, &c."

Comment. Hach monstration

We answer (1) to these objections. If we were to answer as you do, the answers would be weak enough. Let us endeavour to give some more satisfactory.

Ift. Even if it was clear that there did not exist this day more than four hundred thousand Lews on the face of the earth, could we thence conclude that the posterity of Abraham has not been, according to the promife, predigiously great? Let us not mention, as you do, that infinite multitude of children by adoption, and in the faith; let us reckon neither the descendants of Esau, nor those of the fons of Agar and Cethura. Would not those Ifraelites only, who fince the time of Abraham until our days, have descended from him, make up a generation numerous enough to justify the Hebrew figure, which compares them to the stars of the firmament, and the dust of the earth?

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⁽¹⁾ To these objections. Mr. de Voltaire's answer is, that the church, in succession to the synagogue, is Abraham's true race, and that it is indeed very numerous, This answer cannot be very satisfactory to the Jews. Christ.

earth? And what another innumerable race of descendants to this patriarch would four hundred thousand Jews insure, who look upon marriage as a sacred duty, and whose chief object is population?

adly. But are your criticks very certain, that there are not at this day four hundred thousand Jews on the face of the earth? We are not fond of making a parade of our numbers; it is even a stroke of policy in us to conceal it (1) in several places. But without entering here into particulars, which might be detrimental to us, without raising up again those chimeras with which our nation for a long time fed itself, those pretended kingdoms of Thema, Cosar, Chavila, the fabulous empire beyond (2) the Cordeliers.

(1) In feveral places. Father Nau, in his travels thro' the holy land, ascribes this piece of policy to the Jews of Jerusalem. Hasselquist supposes them to amount to thirty thousand in that city only. Christ.

(2) The Cordeliers. Some of the most famous rabbies, missed doubtless by false relations, for a long time fed their nation with these idle stories. Benjamin de Tudele, a traveller of the twelsth century, says, that he found the kingdom of Thema, at twenty days march from Babylon, northward, which was inhabited by Jews called the sons of Rechab; that this kingdom extends into the mountains for sixteen days march; that they reckon two hundred villages in it, an hundred towns, forty cities, and three hundred thousand Jews in these cities,

14 to the Modernia.

liers, &c. &c. have your criticks never made this observation, that there is no part of the world world

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cities, inured to arms, and formidable to their neighbours.

Eldad, who fays he was of the tribe of Dan, and who wrote probably at the end of the thirteenth century, relates that the tribe of Dan, followed by those of Gad, Nepthali, and Asher, retired into Ethiopia before the destruction of the first temple, that they settled in the ancient Chavila, where they have gold, silver, precious stones, numerous flocks, &c. that when they go to war the trumpet is founded, and that an hundred thousand men of cavalry, and an equal number of infantry are affembled, that each tribe carries on war by itself during three months, after which the booty is divided, that there are many of Samfon's descendants among them,

who are all heroes, &c. &c.

According to the same Eldad, the tribe of Simeon, and the half tribe of Manasse possess the kingdom of Cofar, and twenty-five neighbouring kingdoms pay them tribute. He speaks also of another tribe, that of Moses, fettled near the river Sambarim, in a fertile country abounding in castles and superb habitations. There no unclean or destructive animals are to be found, no flies, foxes or ferpents, &c. in a word, nothing that can be hurtful; the sheep bear twice in the year, and the children never die before their fathers, who live to an hundred and twenty years. The river rolls during fix days billows of fand, mixed with rocks, and this with a noise similar to that of thunder, or of a boisterous sea; on the feventh day the river stops, and is surrounded with a fire which spreads to the distance of half a mile all around, and hinders every one from approaching it,

Peritsol, a Jew of Ferrara, in his Sentiers du Monde, a work published in 1525, and the Rabbi Gerson, the son of Eliezer, in an account published towards the middle

world in which we have not settlements? Cast your eyes from the bounds (1) of Italy to those (2) of England, pass from Tyrol, to the bottom of Siberia, to the Tartars, to China, India, Persia, Arabia, to the whole (3) Ottoman empire; every where you find Jews. Africa sees them not only on its coasts

in

of the last century, relate things still more wonderful of the river and country of Sambarim. Manassé, a samous Rabbi, trusting to the testimony of Aaron Levi, a Spanish Jew, who is also called Montecinos, speaks in his Esperance d'Israel, of a vast country beyond the Cordeliers, peopled by Jews who are powerful and numerous, &c. Such are the romances in which the Jewish nation reaps comfort for its losses, and feeds its hopes. It appears that our writers have but an indifferent opinion of these accounts. See Basnage, Barattier, Historical Essays on the Jews, &c. Christ.

(1) Of Italy. The Jews are tolerated in all the Italian states; they have academies at Rome, Leghorn, Venice, &c. they have more than an hundred syna-

gogues in the Ecclesiastical state. Idem.

(2) Of England. We are assured that if the Jews of Italy, the Comtat, France, Holland, and England were put together, they would amount to sive hundred thousand, and twice this number may be found in Germany, Poland, and Russia. Idem.

(3) Ottoman empire. The Italian Rabbi Simon Luzatier, reckoned up ninety thousand Jews at Salonica and Constantinople, and more than a million of them in the

Turkish dominions; Passano, he says, li milioni.

Basnage gives his opinion still more clearly. "It is hard, "he says, to determine at this time, the number of souls "of which this nation now consists, however we may safe-"ly compute them at three millions." These calculations differ much from those of the bold criticks quoted by Mr. de Voltaire. Idem.

in Egypt, Algiers, Morocco, &c. but even in the interior parts; and we already reckon several synagogues in America. Do you think, fir, that the Jews, thus spread from one end of the world to the other, do not amount to four hundred thousand? We think you did not form this judgment of us, when comparing us to the Banians and the (1) Guebres, you say,

Text.

"These two nations are spread over on"ly one part of the East, but the Jews are
spread over the face of the whole earth;
and if they were gathered together they
would form a much more numerous people than they ever were in that short space
of time in which they were sovereigns of
Palestine. (Premiers Melanges, art. des
Juiss.)

Comment.

This is, we think, plainly contradicting your criticks, for furely you will not fay that

(1) And to the Guebres. That is to the Parsi. The word Guebre is a reproach, it signifies an Insidel. The Turks give this people that name thro' contempt, whom they look upon as idolaters, and worshippers of fire; they hate them as such, and have a long time persecuted them. How happens it that Mr. de Voltaire gives this opprobrious name to his dear Parsi, a people who, according to him, has professed a pure religion since the world began. Edit.

that when David was vanquishing, the Ammonites, subduing Idumea, taking Damascus, and extending his conquests from the Euphrates to the frontiers of Egypt, the Jewish nation consisted of much less than four bundred thousand souls.

If it had always confifted of a much less number, would the kings of Assyria, Babylon, those of Egypt, Syria, even the Romans have fent such powerful armies, and such great generals to subdue them? We must then suppose, that this little nation was very warlike; now you tell us, that it was less so than the Egyptians ever cowards.

Therefore, fir, your criticks cannot be right, except you are wrong, very wrong. We prefer the supposition that they are mistaken, and we will oppose your authority to theirs on the present number of the Jews, and conclude that the promise made to Abraham, that he should be the father of a great multitude, may be looked on as literally accomplished, since he has had so many descendants.

written fearce fix hunded years before the

The difficulties of the learned critick on the hiftory of Abraham, and our answers summed up.

Would you wish now, sir, to see at one Vol. II. N view

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view what your difficulties on the history of Abraham and our answers amount to? Thus the account stands.

You object to us the long journey he undertook, and you cannot tell from whence he fet out; you talk of a dreadful distance, and you confess that it consisted only of an hundred leagues; you say there was a prodigious difference between the languages, and these languages had such an affinity, that whosoever understood one, must easily have understood the other.

You tell us of deserts, which exist only in your imagination; of old age, which was the bloom of life; and of some pretended anachronisms, whilst you fall into real ones yourfelf.

You object to us the traditions of the Arabians, and you take these traditions from very modern authors, destitute as you confess of taste and knowledge; you produce writings against us, which you affirm to be the most ancient on earth, and which were written scarce six hundred years before the christian era; also a book which you cry up, altho' the translator of it declares it wretched; also, an abridgment of this book which you are so well acquainted with, that you took it for a man.

You You

You fend Abraham the distance of two hundred leagues from Sichem to Memphis to feek for bread, and there is not that diftance between Sichem and Memphis; and Abraham did not set out from Sichem, and did not go to Memphis; he could not go to it for this good reason, that Memphis did not then exist; and even if it had, he might have got bread nearer home.

In order to render Abraham's victory incredible, instead of four kings you reckon five; you make of these kings powerful monarchs, without knowing their dominions. You represent to yourself the valley of Sodom, &c. as a favage corner of the earth, and it was a lovely fruitful country; you place a bituminous lake in it, and there was no lake. You will not allow that a small army may defeat a great one, and history fupplies us with many inftances of it.

You affert, that God did not give the promifed land in possession to the Israelites, and the Israelites assure you, that they have possessed it, and that if they did not possess it more fully, and for a longer time, it was their own faults.

Laftly, in order to flew that the posterity of Abraham has not been fo numerous as the promife faid, you reduce the actual numendeavimed

of hunwedennientators, to find from

N 2

ber of Jews to four hundred thousand, and the Jews will tell you in your ear, that they consist of four millions of souls; and they think that four millions of men, without reckoning those that have died since the time of Abraham until now, and those that shall be born until the consummation of ages, are a noble race.

We submit this to you, sir, whether the answers are not as good as the objections. Let us conclude by a reflection which the history of Abraham and of his travels has suggested to you concerning his commentators.

dires on her some Text.

"Commentators have wrote a prodigious number of books to justify Abraham's conduct and to reconcile chronology; we must therefore refer the reader to these comments. They are all written by elegant polished geniuses, totally free from prejudice and pedantry, excellent metaphysicians.

Comment. of Mild stone if

Many commentators, so far from having wrote books to justify Abraham's conduct, have condemned it without hesitation; this we have said already; and those who have endeavoured

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(1) In one passage. This passage, (as we said above,) is the 32d verse of the 11th chap, of Genesis, where it is said, that Thare died at the age of two hundred and five years. We have observed that this difficulty is removed by the Samaritan text, which gives Thare but one hundred and forty-five years at the time of his death. which agrees perfectly with the period of Abraham's birth, seventy years after the birth of his father. We think we shall oblige our readers by inserting here, what a writer has faid of it, who is famous for his knowledge of the scriptures, (Mr. Rondet, Journal de Verdun, August 1769.) The difference between the Hebrew and the Samaritan text, (he fays) is not so great as it appears at first. These sums may have been written in numeral letters, and then the difference will be reduced to a single stroke of the pen. The letter kopb, fignifies an hundred and the letter mem, forty, now this latter differs from the former, but by a stroke of the pen. Let no one fay that this reading contradicts the Hebrew text, the vulgate, and the septuagint, so far from this it comes to their affiftance, by folving the difficulty which occurs in all these three, and which appeared to St. Jerom insolvable. The faults which creep into a text are not that text. To clear up the text is not contradicting it. No it is rather banishing the spots, and restoring it to its former splendour. This reading does not contradict any part of the text of scripture. On the contrary it reconciles them all. Here is a clear and fatisfactory folution, and yet we see it is not a volume. Chrift.

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We must therefore refer the reader to these comments. Perhaps the reader might better be referred to the learned discoveries of the present gentlemen; they are all written by judicious and moderate men, people of deep learning, who reason justly, are free from prejudice, and as we have shewn, are no way giddy.

SIXTH EXTRACT.

Of the Jews, and of the various imputations which the illustrious writer casts on them.

We shall proceed now with your leave, fir, from the history of the patriarch, to the judgments which you pass on his descendants. Alas, how you handle them, fir! pungent raillery, bitter farcasms, angry appellations, false and often infamous charges! In short you indulge yourself in every thing that can blacken their characters.

If you were one of those obscure scribblers, whose works are doomed to die before themselves, we should be little moved by these accusations. But your talents and your name are so likely to give them weight, that we think an answer unavoidable. We have already consuted some of your charges; let us now discuss some more of them.

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Imputation that they are a vulgar nation, un-

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One of the mildest charges you have laid against our fathers, is that they were always vulgar and ignorant. You had said it many times, and you repeat it again in one of your last works. You there talk of them as of

their folemaines by the politicofrection iest by the found of infinites to, unaffect and dead events one and the committeed to writing

" A wretched nation, ever ignorant and " vulgar, firangers to trade and the arts."

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The Hebrews were a vulgar people. Do you think, fir, that no nations are worthy of efteem but polished nations, such as the Athenians, and the French? What do you think then of those renowned people the Cretans, the Spartans, were they wretched nations?

Strangers to the arts. Does it become you, a writer of the eighteenth century, to charge the ancient Hebrews with ignorance? A people, who, whilst your barbarous ancestors, whilst even the Greeks and Latins wandering in the woods, could scarcely pro-

cure for themselves cloathing, and a fettled fublistence, already possessed all arts of neceffity, and fome also of mere pleasure; who not only knew how to feed and rear cattle. till the earth, work up wood, stone and metals, weave cloaths, dye wool, embroider stuffs, polish and engrave on precious stones. but who, even then, adding to manual arts those of tafte and refinement, furveyed land, appointed their festivals according to the motion of the heavenly bodies, and ennobled their folemnities by the pomp of ceremonies, by the found of instruments, musick and dancing; who even then committed to writing the history of the origin of the world, that of their own nation, and of their ancestors; who had poets and writers skilled in all the sciences then known, great and brave commanders, a pure worship, just laws, a wife form of government; in short, who is the only one, of all ancient nations, that has left us authentick monuments of genius and of literature. Can this nation be justly charged with ignorance? on benwoner slode to the Sourtains, were they wretched nations

The Hebrews were strangers to the arts. We confess that they did not know, like the Greeks, how to animate the canvass, and make the marble breathe. An idle audience was not seen among them decreeing crowns to dramatick poets. Their apartments were not adorned with glasses of immense breadth,

or

or repeating clocks; they had no rope-dancers amongst them, nor were burlesque scenes exhibited on the ramparts of their city, &c. &c. But do you not value these shining accomplishments a little too high? Every nation that has them not, appears wretched to you. Ancient legislators were of a very different mind; alk Minos, alk Lycurgus, and fo many others who prohibited those arts. which inchant you, from among their citizens: ask Plato, who(1) banished poets from his commonwealth. If these arts, the offfpring of luxury, were absolutely necessary to the glory of nations, and the splendour of states, by what fatality does it happen that they never make their appearance among any, but as the forerunners of their fall? When Pericles introduced them into Athens, flavery flood at the gates; and the golden age of Rome was not that in which an enflaved people asked of its tyrants subfiftence and shows, so sharing mounts as low sing virtue is Something. O

We

who calculate for exactly the pro-

⁽¹⁾ Banished poets from his commonwealth. He did not banish all poets indiscriminately; he banished none but satyrical poets, who tear the reputation of their neighbours, licentious poets who corrupt their morals, impious poets who bring religion into contempt, and give salse notions of the Deity, &c. &c. The philosophical legislator would therefore have left the Henriade amongst his republicans, &c. &c. Edit.

We may fay the fame of trade. You have high notions of it, and wife law-givers dreaded it for their commonwealths; they thought that it would destroy that equality of property, and aufterity of manners which they wished to perpetuate and establish among their citizens; they imagined that as trade brings in wealth, wealth fails not speedily to introduce all those vices which are the forerunners and causes of the ruin of states And experience has often justified this way of reasoning. The Tyrian, proud of his fleets and of his wealth, has not subsisted so long as the Jew; the learned and polite Athens never ruled over auftere Lacedemon; and the Carthaginian merchant became the prev of the Roman citizen, who excelled in war and husbandry. Therefore the splendour which commerce gives to flates does not infure their duration, nor does it make them truely respectable. Among nations, fir, as well as among private persons, money is not every thing, virtue is something. O ye politicians, who calculate fo exactly the products of the arts and the profits of trade, do you think the amor patrize, religion, and morals, of no confequence in states?

Upon the whole, you are too well informed not to know that the Hebrews were not always strangers to trade, and that under Solomon and some of his successors they had a very

a very beneficial and extensive one. The charge then of never having had trade, is one of those which you should least of all have laid on us; many nations of antiquity have had less trade, without having been on that account wretched nations.

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Superstition charged on the Jews.

Let us proceed to another charge, fir, which you lay on our fathers, with as little justice as the former. If we are to believe you,

s problem no use Text. in anyly but about

"The Jews were a superstitious people, "and the most superstitious of all people.

events in the course of the heavenly bodies, and in the diebt o. traumo? on along footh-

A superstitious people. What is it you call superstition, sir? Is it to believe in one God, and to worship him only? Is it the having an external worship, and observing religiously such rites as were established for wise reasons?

The most superstitious of all people. Either you are absent, Sir, or you do not speak seriously. You certainly forget the Greeks, with

with their abfurd theogony, and their adulterous, ravishing, plundering Gods, &c. (1) the Egyptian worshipping goats and monkies, and offering incense to cats and crocodiles, to leeks and onions; the Romans confulting the facred chickens on the fate of battles, and confecrating statues to the god Fart, altars to Terror, and temples to Fever: the Persian prostrate before fire, covering his mouth with a veil, left he should contaminate it with his breath, and rubbing himfelf over with the urine of an ox, as a purification; the Indian standing whole months on one leg, his arms extended, his neck inclined, or driving large nails into his buttocks, and dying with refignation, holding a cow's tail in his hand. You forget all the nations of antiquity paying religious worship to wood and stone, searching for future events in the course of the heavenly bodies, and in the flight of birds, confulting foothfayers, interrogating the dead, applying to enchanters, trembling before forcerers, &c. in a word given up to the most absurd and ins souved out it at Sylno mid G extravagant external worthip, and objecting rebenously

⁽¹⁾ The Egyptian. The illustrious writer has declared strongly against the superstitions of Egypt. The religion, says he, of those priests (the Egyptian priests) who ruled the state, was worse than that of the most savage nations. It is well known that they worshipped crocodiles, cats, onions, and there is not perhaps now on the face of the earth any other fort of worship so absurd, except that of the great Lama. Edit.

extravagant superstitions. And even if their fuperstitions had been merely ridiculous and abfurd, but they had many besides which were impure and cruel! How many nations thought they honoured their gods by infamous debauchery and shocking facrifices, in which their fellow-creatures or their own children ferved as victims? All thefe ridiculous and abominable species of superstition tolerated, authorised by their laws, and which amongst them formed a part of publick worship, were expressly forbidden to the Jew by his law; and yet you charge him with having been the most superstitious of all men! If we judge of this people as we ought to do, by its worship and its laws, it has been certainly less tainted with superstition than any other ancient people.

interes as sites, him we ned in the street agrand.

Charge of Usury.

You have just now, sir, called the Jews an ignorant and vulgar nation, strangers to trade, you now charge them with a very lucrative trade, that of money-lending.

But the law permitter them to lend at in-

of They were usurers, they practifed usury and of every and of every and of every and of every

" every where, according to the privilege and bleffing of their law."

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You might have censured the Jews, fir, without attacking their law. And in truth, what is there reprehensible in this law?

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It forbids them to take any interest from their brethren; it commands them to lend freely to one another. This was a wife law. because if it had been permitted to lend at interest, in a country where the great resources of trade were unknown, and where the inhabitants lived entirely by their lands and their cattle, the borrower would foon have been swallowed up by the rich and greedy lender, as often happened in the first ages of Rome; it was a charitable law too, and if we are not mistaken, unprecedented amongst ancient nations; it recalled to the minds of the Hebrews their common origin, and obliged them to treat one another as relations and brethren, and thus united them more firmly together by the ties of gratitude and benevolence. trade, that of money-linding.

But the law permitted them to lend at interest to strangers. Yes, and in this it only gave them that liberty which they gave to one another, not only the native to the stranger, stranger, but the citizen to his fellow-citizen. Was it fit to deprive the Hebrews of this way of getting bread, and oblige them to lend their money freely to those trading nations which furrounded them, and to run the risks of trade without sharing in the profits of it? If you think, fir, that Jews could not lend firangers money at interest without transgreffing the law of nature, your morality is too rigid. That of the great Montesquieu, and even of many of your casuists is not so fevere; you require a perfection from the lews which even christians, in most commercial states, dispense with. Was it not sufficient for them to require no forbidden or exorbitant interest; to commit no frauds or extortions; in a word, to deviate in no wife from the general principles of equity and humanity, which are founded on the law of nature?

Perhaps you may fay, that the Jews never observed these rules. We allow that some of them have transgressed them; but do their laws give them any dispensation here? Let the guilty be punished, but let no charge lie against the nation, or its laws.

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françon, het the citizen to his feliant-citizen. Was it it to depriv**eth** liebrers and it is

Robbery and plunder charged on the Jews by the illustrious writer.

You think it not enough, fir, to accuse us of usury, you call us besides robbers and plunderers.

gamelered M. igore Text. to defill . Shelt oo;

"Their God makes robbers of this whole "nation; he orders them to borrow and to "carry away all the vases of gold and sil-"ver, &c."

This charge has been fo often answered, that we have reason to be astonished at finding it so often repeated in your works.

Must we be obliged to tell you once more that altho' it were certain, (1) which is not the case, that the Hebrews had borrowed from

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(1) Which is not certain. James Capella, and other interpreters fay, that the Israelites had not borrowed but demanded these rich vases as a free gift. And indeed the Hebrew word Shaal, signifies at least very frequently to demand, and not to borrow. Josephus says also, that the Egyptians made great presents to the Hebrews, some out of regard, and some in order to make them leave the country speedily. See Chais.

We have thought ourselves obliged to adopt the com-

mon interpretation. Aut.

from the Egyptians vales of gold and filver, which they carried off, there was nothing blame-worthy in their conduct. This gold and filver was the lawful hire of their long and painful services.

In vain you will answer, that slaves have not a right to pay themselves; this is confounding the rights of private persons with those of nations; private persons have courts of justice, to which they may complain and obtain redrefs, but nations have no fuch thing, they are their (1) own judges.

Can there be a better one? If the animy or To robbery, you fay, the Hebrews foon gives would you think it a bearshauld babba

word, of they held this country from God, no notifellion could be atter lawful; if they ob-

"They possessed themselves of the coun-"try of Canaan, which did not belong to " them." the remember of the state of the

Word I do w W Oot belt ave Comment. stabans, the fon of a potter, Abraham the

mer detellable alvadersis i Ve I

(1) Own judges. There may be a fuller and more fa-tisfactory answer made to this objection. God is supreme proprietor of all things on earth, and he thought proper that part of the Egyptian property should go to the Israelites, and for this purpose he gave them favour in the fight of the Egyptians. The act therefore was really God's, and his people were in this case merely his aftruments. g. Trans. Dir is an molest estraited as

from the Egyptian trammod gold and filver, which they carried off, there; was nothing

If you call our fathers plunderers on account of this conquest, what were your fathers?

lu yain von will answer, that flayes have

"If it is asked what right strangers, such " as the lews, had to this country, it is an-" fwered, that they had the right which God of justice, to which they may "ment ever " obtain reducts, but sasmon ave no fuch thing;

they are their (1) own judges

Can there be a better one? If the answer was, that they had that right which force gives, would you think it a better one? In a word, if they held this country from God, no possession could be more lawful; if they obtained it by the fword, they were in the fame case with other nations whom you extol. try of Canaan, which eld not belong to

Text. Which

"The Jews used to say, we descend from " Abraham, the fon of a potter, Abraham tra-" velled amongst you; therefore your coun-" try belongs to us." prested broundelor on all things on earth, and he monthly

or on blund ve soon Comment. and to rung this regard the ligarities, and for this purpose he have them there

It is easy, but it is not fair to make your adversaries reason in a ridiculous manner.

The Jews, fir, never reasoned thus. No. but they used to say, "God promised to our " fathers to give this country to their de-" foendants; he has put us in a way of con-" quering it; we are come to take poffeffi-" on of it flee or fubmit. If you refift, " we shall proceed according to his commif-" fion, to punish your crimes and destroy " you." We think, fir, that this language, supported by so many miracles wrought in their favour, had nothing ridiculous in it. If instead of this they had faid, " you have " fruitful lands and we have none; give your " lands up to us or you shall fall by the edge " of the fword;" they would have faid no more to the Canaanites than the Medes faid to the Affyrians, the Perfians to the Medes. the Romans to the Persians, the Franks and the Goths to the Romans, &c. in short, what every conquering nation has faid to the conquered. How comes it that these latter feem to you to be renowned warriors, and the former detestable plunderers? We see but die difference between both parties, which is that fplendid miracles proved that the Jews were favoured by God in their conquests. Therefore to charge them with plunder, is charging God himself, or accusing them in particular of a crime, which they have committed in common with almost all the nations of the many good historians and able criticits idras diA looked, and which O as referred for you,

15,

All these charges therefore of vulgarity. ignorance, fuperstition, usury, plunder, &c. which you have so often repeated, are either vain or false; they are also only the forerunners of a still more shocking one which you are preparing against us. Happily for us the heinousness of it, added to the want of proofs, will be fufficient grounds for not giving it a ferious answer. institutor estantini visian on yel bomotiqui

SEVENTH EXTRACT. If infload of this therethed faid, "you have

Of the Jews; whether they were, as Mr. de Voltaire affirms, a nation of Cannibals. and bill award bloom wall "brown ad to "

What an advantage it is, fir, to possess a spirit of impartiality and superior knowledge, when a man is investigating antiquity! Such a man will make discoveries which common criticks would not even have fuspected. quesell. How comes it that thefe latter from

Such a discovery you have now made, which will be a lafting addition to our treasure of historical knowledge; it is a curious, fingular, interesting discovery, which belongs wholly to you, without being obliged to share the glory of it with any body elfe. mode serials of himself, or accusing them in particular of a

This mighty discovery, which so many great interpreters and learned commentators, for many good hiftorians and able criticks have overlooked, and which was referved for you,

is, that our fathers were a clan of favages, fuch as the Cannibals, or worse, man-eaters, among whom this horrid food was common, even in the time of the prophets.

Until your time, fir, this fact was unknown, and you have now blazoned it to the world. This affertion so new, not to say extraordinary, appeared to us at first to be one of those jokes in which certain writers indulge themselves, sometimes even on the most serious subjects; and the nonsense which you throw out so merrily in the letter of your Mr. Clocpitre, confirmed us in this opinion.

But however, it appears that your affertion is undoubtedly serious; you repeat it gravely in a work where you give yourself out for the friend and reconciler of men. From this work it has passed into others, even into the Dictionary termed Philosophical, and even into the additions to your wise and veritable Universal History.

If the novelty of the discovery has astonished some readers, the singularity of the proofs, on which you establish it, will surprize them still more. We shall now produce some of the most demonstrative among them. By these we may form a judgment of the rest.

only #

We shall pay no attention to the things which you make your Mr. Cloepitre say. These are not arguments to be canyassed, but jokes to be laughed at. You are worthy of a hearing only when you speak as an historian and a philosopher.

would. This affection of mew, not to favex-

First proof drawn from this that many nations have fed on human sless.

There have been nations man-eaters, therefore the Jews were fo. Thus you reason; and this argument appears so convincing to you, that you employ it with the greatest confidence.

edited the throw Text, wey are dwithout is at

"The greatest part of travellers and missionaries, (you say in your additions to the "Universal History) agree that the Brasilians, the Caribs, the Iroquois, the Hurons, "&c. devour their captives; and they do not look upon this as the act of some individuals, but as the custom of the nation. So many authors, ancient and modern, have spoke of man-eaters, that it is impossible to doubt their existence. I saw in the year 1725, at Fontainbleau, a female savage of the colour of ashes; I asked her if she had ever eat human sless, "she

" the answered me yes very coolly, and as " if the was replying to a common question."

"In the most polished ages, the people of

" Paris eat the bloody remains of Marshal " d'Ancre, and the people of the Hague

" devoured the heart of the great pensioner

" de Wit." (Additions)

Sec Sec. But we do no "We have spoke of love, (you fay again " in your Philosophical Dictionary, article " Anthropophages) it is cruel to go from " people who kifs one another, to others " who eat one another. It is but too frue " that there have been man-caters; we have " found some in America, there are proba-" bly some still in it. The Cyclopes were " not the only feeders on human flesh; the " Tintyrites, the Gascons, the Saguntines " fed formerly on the flesh of their country-" men. Why should not the Jews have been " man-eaters? This was the only thing "God's chosen people wanted to make them " the most abominable nation on earth." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

To a moles of T . Comment.

no confequent, here, but it is inconcervable for what

We do not dispute what so many ancient and modern writers have related. And since the greatest part of the first travellers and missionaries all agree that the Brazilians, &c. feed

Looks of the Old Teftament fry of this dust one establish

feed on human flesh, and that a female savage of the colour of ashes, (1) for the colour is a great matter, answered you coolly that she had eat of it, we are far from denying fuch well-attefted facts. We will even allow the report of antiquity concerning the Cyclopes, who fometimes eat human flesh, &c. &c. But we do not believe that you wish to draw from these examples any inference against our fathers. The origin of the Jews is well known, and we are certain that they never had the advantage of paffing thro' the favage state, which a great philofopher of the eighteenth century fays is the state of nature. Perhaps they have not been fo well polished as the descendants of the Gauls, hor are they so phlegmatick as the Dutch; but it would be hard to shew that they have been oftener fubject to those violent gufts of paffion than the nations just mentioned. Even these fits of rage, when scarcely two or three such instances can be produced in the whole history of a nation,

⁽¹⁾ For the colour is a great matter. The colour is of no consequence here, but it is inconceivable of what consequence it is in other places, according to the opinion of the great writer whom we have the honour of attacking. The colour, he says, distinguishes the several races of men; a fair and a brown man; a black and a white, &c. &c. cannot possibly have descended from the same stock; this is evident beyond dispute. See however what the learned author of the defence of the books of the Old Testament says of it. Aut.

are not sufficient grounds for branding them with the name of Cannibals; and in short, as there is always something shocking in devouring a fellow-creature, we think that a whole people ought not to be charged with it merely on conjecture or inference.

It is cruel to go from people who kiss one another, to others who eat one another. Happy transition! Poignant contrast! (1) What a fund of wit and decency here!

Why should not the Jews have been men-eaters? This why not is truly convincing and demonstrative. It is hard to hold out against such powerful reasonings as this; and what follows especially is full of politeness, philosophical moderation, and particularly of the love of truth; this is one of the noblest antitheses in all your works where they abound.

The Tintyrites, the Saguntines, the Gascons, &c. There is we think some difference between these nations and the Hebrews. Ocular

(1) What a fund of wit and decency here. Thus in the remaining part of this article, these abominable excesses are called sooleries. Such is the light tone which the author assumes in this philosophical work. See l'Apalogie de la Religion Chretienne. Mr. de Voltaire has declared that all the articles in the D. Etionary are not by the same hand; perhaps then the article Anthropophages is not his. The new edition will probably clear up what articles are properly his, Aut.

lar witnesses, well informed travellers, fav that the former of these feed on human flesh. but before you, no writer ever faid that the Ifraelites generally used this food. Your authority, fir, is certainly very respectable, but it is not altogether cotemporary, nor, at least when our fathers are in question, is it quite impartial. Could you quote no authority nearer to their times? Yes, you fay, trunction Postmant confluen

Lund of will and dec. 1. I will be the start to boul

Second proof. Threatenings of Moses.

Text.

out of Assessment Same

- " Even Moses threatens the Jews that " they shall eat their children, if they trans-" gress the law." (Additions.)
- "They are not commanded in any place " to eat human flesh; they are only threat-" ened with it; and Moses tells them that if " they do not observe his ceremonies, the " mothers shall eat their children." losophical Dictionary.) " (a) White had a food and direct orth. "This in

Comment. see dooks astralout institution are an forty east note

This proof, fir, is as strong as the former.

Moses threatens the Jews that they shall eat their children, &c. Therefore they were maneaters! A confequence nobly deduced! Others would draw a quite contrary conclusion; but every man has his peculiar way of reasoning, and the logick of illustrious writers is very different from that of the vulgar.

The Yews are not commanded in any place to eat human flesh. This confession is very kind, you deferve the thanks of the Jewish nation for it.

They are only threatened with it. Since they are threatened with it, this is a proof that this fort of food was neither commonly used amongst them, nor agreeable. If a Cannibal was threatened with being compelled to eat human flesh, he would laugh. People can only be threatened with naufeous deteftable food; thus your very expressions contradict your arguments.

Third proof drawn from the promises of Ezekiel.

But you fay, fir, that as they are threatened in one place with being obliged to eat human flesh, so they are promised it, as an indulgence, in another. text. Texte means a joke, where is the jeft in mitrepie.

Text.

- "Ezekiel promises the Jews, by way of "encouragement, that they shall eat human "flesh." (Treatise of Toleration.)
- "And (page 22d of the additions to the Universal History) the prophet (1) Ezekiel promises the Hebrews from God, that if they defend themselves well against the king of Persia, they shall eat the slesh of

" horses and of the riders."

- "And (in the Sermon of the Rabin Akib)
 "our enemies accuse us of having offered
 "up men, and even of having eaten them,
 "as Ezekiel says.
- "And (article Anthropophages, Philosophical Dictionary) it is certain that the
 Jews must have used human sless for food
 in the time of Ezekiel, since he foretells
 to them, in the 39th chapter, that if they
 defend themselves well against the king
 of Persia, they shall eat not only the horses
 but besides the horsemen, and the other
 men of war. This is positive."

Comment.

(1) Ezekiel promises, &c. If Mr. de Voltaire speaks feriously, as there is reason to believe, is it credible that he ever read the place of Ezekiel which he quotes so often? If he means a joke, where is the jest in misrepresenting a writer, and making him say what he never thought? Edit.

Gomment.

Cot and have Lives hee'th the Lord Gat thould This at least is often repeated in your works. This proof appears fo convincing to you, that it returns perpetually. Let us, with your permission, fir, examine it.

Exekiel promises the Yews that they shall eat the flesh of horses and of the riders. Therefore this flesh was to them excellent food. Now indeed the confequence is just, it is irrefiftible; it only remains to enquire whether the prophet really afferts what the philosopher puts into his mouth. But can this be doubted, or the least suspicion formed of it? To quote falfely, and afcribe to an author a very different meaning from his real one, not once and curforily, but in twenty places, not only in jest but in earnest; can a grave historian and a philosopher who loves truth, be guilty of these things? This is playing too openly on the credulity of his readers, and greatly abusing the confidence they place in him.

However the flesh of horse and horseman was not a common food; as our philosophical historian is a poet, and that poets sometimes indulge themselves in fiction, it will not be improper to produce here the whole paffage of the prophet. Thus it runs in the translation. 2012 normal to allow od There-

a light to it, it is not Attick fall! Each

that Potked them, and rob thafe th

Missery, rose that this whole leaser. Temy is

Therefore, thou fon of man, prophely against Gog and say, Thus saith the Lord God, behold I am against thee O Gog. And I will turn thee back, and leave but the fixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts. and will bring thee upon the mountains of Ifi rael: And I will smite thy bow out of thy left band, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right band. Thou shalt full upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every fort, and to the beafts of the field to be devoured. Behold it is come. and it is done, faith the Lord God, this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall fet on fire and burn the weapons, both the flields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the hand-staves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire, and they shall spoil these that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, faith the Lord God. And it swall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Ifrael, the valley of the paflengers on the east of the sea and it shall stop the nofes of the paffengers, and there shall they bury Gog, and all his multitude, and they Thall call it the valley of Hamon-gog incidential and writer, and making him lay what he mand

And thou fon of man, thus faith the Lord God, freak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come, gather yourselves on every side to my sacri-fice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink (1) the blood of the princes of the earth. And ye shall eat fat 'till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my facrifice which I have facrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled (2) at my table with borses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, faith the Lord God.

A man.

(1) The blood of the princes of the earth, &c. We Hebrews think, that a man might find in this passage, tho' poorly translated, warmth, strong ideas, bold figures, &c. Some christians are of the same way of thinking, but they may be mistaken as well as we. We read some thing similar to this in the Runnic poetry, the ravens and the vultures, says the poet, lament the mighty war which was preparing for them a rich feast.

But all these strokes of barbarous eloquence do not

come up to what the Philosophical Dictionary fays, that warriors, for the poorest salary, do the office of cooks for ravens and worms. It is probable that most people

will find these expressions very elegant. Edit.
(2) At my table. We shall observe, en passant, that with respect to these words, at my table, the almoner Mr. Clocpitre makes a most judicious reslection; it is this, fince a table is mentioned these verses must be applied to the Jews, for, fays he, ravenous animals do not make use of a table. This kind of reasoning, or rather pleasantry, runs thro' this whole letter. Truly if there is falt in it, it is not Attick falt! Edit.

A man, fir, must have your eyes to fee, that in this place Ezekiel promifes the Jews to give them human flesh to eat; certainly none but yourself can see any thing like this in it. The text and common sense evidently confine this promise to ravenous animals.

We that earlies their car fleth, and drink blood. of the mighty, and drink (1) the blood of the

A scruple of the critick.

It feems, fir, you have had some stings of conscience, for having extended this promise even to our fathers. of cour, faith the Lord Go

Text.

" It is generally thought, that (1) a mistake " has been committed in that place where the " passage of Ezekiel is quoted, which proin miles that they shall eat the flesh of the " horse and the horseman. This promise is " made by the prophet to ravenous animals." (Treatife of Toleration.) But all their droites of barbarage cloquence do not

come up to what the Plittismmod Lacionary lags, the correspond for the page

It is generally thought. As if you was not fure of it, and that any body could reasonably form a doubt of it. o chief words, or ti fo touble a mile with the control of the

in tince a table is meditioned thefe verter madouse ans

(1) See nota bene at the end of the first edition of the Treatife on Toleration. Inlah danis ton ai ii, il ni ilah si

plied to the Jews, for, leve he, mavenous enlineds do nhe

This promise is made. One would imagine that you were going to confess your mistake and retract it; but this is not the case, your scruples last but a short time. You immediately add,

Text.

"There are four verses in which the pro-"phet promises this food of blood and slaugh-"ter. The two last may be applied to the "Jews as well as to wolves and vultures;

" but commentators apply them only to ra-

" venous animals. (Ibid.)

" If some commentators apply these two " verses to ravenous animals, there are se-" veral others who apply them to the Jews." (Ibidem, another edition)

Comment.

The two last verses may be applied to the Jews, &c. Certainly they may, if all the rules of grammar and good sense are violated.

But commentators apply them only to ravenous animals, &c. Very true, commentators make no other application of them. How then could you say in the other edition, if some commentators apply these two verses to ravenous animals, there are several others who apply them to the Jews? We think we see Vol. II. Paccontradiction

a contradiction here; but probably we are mistaken; you have some method of reconciling such contrary affertions.

There are several others who apply them to the Jews, &c. If you know several, you should at least have named some. As for us, we confess we know none, not one except you put yourself in the list of commentators. But you affert that there are such, and that is sufficient for some readers. How can we refuse to believe an author on his word who declares, that when he writes, truth holds the pen?

Such are your strongest proofs, sir; such is the justness and solidity of your reasoning! Is it not evident that the Hebrews are thus clearly convicted of eating human sless, not only in common, but as delicious food? This discovery indeed is humbling for their descendants! But what can they do? What answers can be given to such demonstrations?

To conclude. After having laughed a little at the reasonings, let us sincerely pity the reasoner. Does it become, sir, so great a man as you are, a philosopher, the enemy of prejudices, the first historian of his nation, to dishonour his writings by such gross calumnies and false quotations? And, to use your

your own words, ought he to offer (1) fuch bigh infults to truth and to his readers?

The illustrious Bossuet did not write history in this manner. This great man and truly sublime genius, whom you dare call a declaimer, was better acquainted with its dignity and laws. He well knew that altho' it is the province of history to judge nations, yet it has no right to calumniate them.

teller ad Padrillade gi

And

(1) Such bigh infults, &c. We do not approve the use of such expressions with regard to Mr. de Voltaire; altho' he has not scrupled to use them against the Jesuit Daniel. There is a certain style and certain liberties which great men may assume, but which the rest of mankind must not pretend to. Edit.

Because this Jesuit happened to say that Harry IV. embraced the Roman religion, not only thro' state policy, but thro' conviction, Mr. de Voltaire infers that a Jesuit cannot be a faithful historian. This may be true; but it may be affirmed not only of a Jesuit, but of every man who is not impartial, no matter what coat he wears.

He says in another place, that father Daniel does not pass for an historian of great depth and boldness, but that he is accounted a very faithful one. Compare these several affertions.

He adds, that father Daniel sometimes falls into mistakes, but that no man can justly call him a lyar. And yet we may justly say, that he offers insults to truth and to his readers. We may justly call him a wretched historian. Dans des Conseils raisonnables.

Thus this great man takes liberties which he will grant to no others, even the liberty of contradicting himself, which he would not fail to censure severely in any other. Christ.

And what fort of philosophy is this, which hurried on by paffion, and enflaved by the blindest prejudices, indulges itself in these fallies of abuse, against a people whose defcendants are already but too much to be pitied? Is this the philosophy of Locke, or Montesquieu? trisupos rettod asw .

laws. He well know that although You fay, somewhere, that there are historical errors and historical lyes; add to this, that there are historical calumnies; and judge yourself in which class is to be ranked this imputation which we have now confuted.

EIGHTH EXTRACT.

Of circumcision. Mistakes and contradictions of the learned critick on the practice of this rite among It the Hebrews.

Circumcifion, fir, is a subject in which you have not had success. You have often spoke of it, but never without falling into fuch mistakes and contradictions as astonish us in a writer of your merit. Permit us, sir, to point out some of them to you. We shall begin by those you have committed on the practice of this rite among the Hebrews.

We open the Philosophical Dictionary and

Text.

" It is faid in the book of Joshua, that " the Jews were circumcifed in the wilder-" ness." (Philosoph. Dictionary, article Circumcifion).

Comment.

Precifely the contrary is faid in the book of Joshua. It is said expressly there, that all the people that were born (1) in the wilderness by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, them they bad not circumcifed; that it was after the passage of Jordan, and before the taking of Jericho, at Gilgal, in the land of promise, that Joshua had them circumcifed, and that this general circumcifion was like a renewal, or a fecond inftitution of this rite, which had been (2) interrupted in the wilderness. Is it possible that there should be a palpable contradiction between what the book of Joshua fays, and what you make it fay?

We finall foon thew you, that the poste-But it is not fufficient to make the book of Joshua, in a quotation, say quite the contrary of what it really does; you contradict yourfelf besides in the plainest manner. that the time of Johns does not begin until

that in the time of losses. Abraham's pol-

Bine Alondbliw oil mon and hab an Text.

⁽¹⁾ In the wilderness. See Joshua, ch. 5. v. 5. (2) Interrupted, &c. See Ibidem, ver. 2, 3.

214: A S HIO R TO

Text.

"Circumcifion, this feal of God's cove-" nant, was not practiced in the wilderness." Toleration, p. 18. office adololida ...

Comment,

Therefore, according to the Philosophical Dictionary, our fathers were circumcifed in the wilderness, and according to the Treatise on Toleration, they were not circumcifed in the wilderness. But this is not all, you passing of Jordan, and before the taking bis Jericho at Gilent in the Tratochiochio That

offina had them eirouncifed, and that this

"The posterity of Abraham was not cir-"cumcifed till the time of Joshua," (Philoloph. Dictionary.) dt ni hougurnathi (2) naed possible that there should be a palpable con-

surflet to Mad Comment. assemed not Silver

fays, and what you make it fay it and not We shall soon shew you, that the posterity of Abraham was circumcifed before the time of Joshua. A monstoup d'nimismbel la

Difference of the transport of the state of

But in the mean while, let us observe here, that the time of Joshua does not begin until after the departure from the wilderness; and that in the time of Joshua, Abraham's posterity was circumcifed in the land of Promise. Un See ibidem. ver. 2, 7

Therefore,

of Inchionus

Therefore, according to the same article of the Philosophical Dictionary, Abraham's posterity was circumcifed, a few lines higher, in the wilderness, and a few lines lower, in the land of Promise; some lines higher, before Joshua, and some lines lower, in the time of Joshua: What a series of contradictions!

You say somewhere, that contradictories may often be reconciled; reconcile these if you can. Text.

her handovou

" The Jews who resided two hundred " and fifty years in Egypt, say that they did
" not get themselves circumcifed during that " space of time." (Ibidem.)

Comment, Comment

The Jews never faid or could fay fuch a thing of managed to nothernous sale

And truly as Moses, Aaron, and all the Jews who died in the wilderness, had been circumcifed, and as this was not done in the wilderness according to the testimony of scripture, and your own affertions, we pray you, fir, to inform us where this was done?

We shall add, that if the Jews neglected circumcifion for two hundred and fifty years, which

which

which was the space of their residence in Egypt, this is a strong proof that this rite was not yet used among the Egyptians; and that the foreskin was not, as you say, an object of horror and contempt to them.

It is furprifing that you do not perceive the inconfistency of your two positions; you maintain on one hand, that the Jews did not get themselves circumcifed during the two hundred and fifty years in which they resided in Egypt; and on the other hand, you affirm, that they borrowed the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians; this is uniting two opinions, the one of which evidently subverts the other.

But here follows fomething more extraordinary.

The Jews never thin on could fay fuch a

"The circumcifion of Abraham was not followed by that of others, and his posterity was not circumcifed until the time of Joshua." (Ibidem.)

Comment,

by that of others. Do you not know then, fir, either the passages of Genesis, in which it

is faid that Ishmael and Isaac (1) were circumcifed; or the discourse of Jacob's children to the father (2) of young Sichem? We cannot do this thing, fay they to him, to give our fifter to one that is uncircumcifed. For that were a reproach unto us; but in this will we consent unto you, if ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised, then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you and we will become one people. Does not this discourse prove clearly, that the posterity of Abraham not only kept up the practice of circumcifion, but that they looked upon it as of indifpenfible obligation, and as a character which distinguished them from the other people of Palestine Pavil odwoodoog Phonicians, and Arabians, except thewest

To these texts you might have added that of Exolus, where it is related that circumcission was given to (3) the son of Moses when his father was on his journey returning into Egypt; and that of Joshua, where it is said expressly, as we have already observed, that the Israelites who died in the wilderness, (consequently before the circumcission)

a represent agreaft the Jews among the Eggp-

⁽¹⁾ Were circumcised. Genesis, ch. 17. v. 26, ch. 21.

v. 4. Aut.
(2) Of young Sichem. Genesis, ch. 34. v. 14. Aut.
(3) To the son of Moses. Exodus, ch. 4. v. 25. Aut.

cifion of Gilgal, and the time of Joshua,) (1) had all been circumcifed.

othe fitteen se of young The Israelites therefore were circumcifed when they went into Egypt, and they went out of it in like manner. Thus it appears that the circumcision of Abraham was not followed by that of others, and that his posterity was not circumcifed until the time of Joshua Larend I wante has per a wordy on the and some sold is no Texts smooth the son bus

of Course prove clearly, that the patientylor " (2) The book of Joshua says; And the " Lord said unto Joshua, this day have I rolled " away the reproach of Egypt from off you. " Now what could be this reproach to a " people who lived amongst the Egyptians, " Phenicians, and Arabians, except it was " fomething that rendered them contempti-" ble to these three nations? How could " this reproach be taken from them? By " taking off a little of the foreskin. Is not " this the natural meaning of this passage?"

is so faid regiment to ma two have abready obside in haib and Comments and indi bayed

widernels, (confequently before the circumift, You cannot fay that the foreskin was a reproach against the Jews among the Egyptians and Arabians, except you suppose that

of the state of th

⁽¹⁾ See Joshua, ch. 5.

⁽²⁾ The book of Joshua Says. Joshua, ch. 5. v. 9.

these two nations practised circumcision before the Hebrews; now of this you produce no proof. Surely, sir, to suppose this, is to beg the question.

"this day my people in an effecial manner, 2dly, You suppose again that circumcifion was practifed among the Phenicians in the time of Joshua; but our facred writers (who probably knew them) represent them to us every where, as a people uncircumcifed at all times. Have you any proofs, fir, of the contrary? You will not furely place in competition the accounts of those writers, who bordered on Phenicia, and must have had certain information of fuch a thing, with the testimony of Herodotus, a stranger, who lived long fince their time, and who, according to yourself, when he relates what the barbarous nations among whom he travelled have told him, talks nonfenfed ni bevil reven bed ved T

3dly. In the passage which you quote, it is said, I have rolled off the reproach of Egypt from off you. You assert that these words signify, I have delivered you from what rendered you contemptible among the Egyptians. But is this the true sense of this passage? And might we not give it a different one with equal, if not more reason?

What would hinder us from supposing, as some commentators have done, that the reproach

of Egypt, so that God might be supposed to say to the Jews, "this character, which you "have now received in your slesh, makes you "this day my people in an especial manner, "a nation independent of every one but me, "and puts the last seal to your deliverance." Or still better, perhaps this reproach is the foreskin itself, which degraded the Israelites in the eyes of the Lord, by confounding them with the (1) uncircumcised and profane Egyptians. These senses, sir, are full as good as yours, altho' you boast of it as of a great discovery.

Is not this, you fay, the natural meaning of this passage? No, sir, it is not and cannot be; for to whom would this discourse be addressed? To the Israelies, circumcised at Gilgal? They had never lived in Egypt. Or to their fathers? They had been circumcised there; the scripture says it expressly. Therefore the foreskin never could have been a reproach to either of these among the Egyptians; and if it had been the cause of shame to their ancestors, what could have prevented them from being circumcised? God had ordered them to

equil, afonocanore reason? searche A bine

⁽¹⁾ Uncircumeifed and profane. If this is the true fense of this passage, as plainly appears, this is a proof that then the Egyptians, at least the bulk of the nation, were yet uncircumcised. Edit.

be so, and the Egyptians did not forbid them. Would they have willingly continued in a state of reproach, which they might so easily have avoided?

NINTH EXTRACT.

Of Circumcifion. Whether the Jews borrowed circumcifion from the Egyptians.

First we agree in this, sir, that this question does not affect the main point of revelation; for, (1) as you well observe, "altho' it "were true that this rite was more ancient "than the Jewish nation, yet God might have "sanctified it; he may according to his good "pleasure, annex his graces to those signs which "he deigns to chuse." According then to your own confession this is merely a critical question.

And accordingly learned men have been much divided on this subject. Some, and this is the opinion of the Jews, Arabians, and of most christians, hold that Abraham and his family used circumcision before any other people; others, and this is the opinion of some learned christians, Marsham, Le Clerc, &c. believe it to be of Egyptian extraction.

You

⁽¹⁾ See Philosophical Dictionary. Aut.

You fail not to adopt this latter opinion, as it seems less favourable to the Jews, and more consonant to your prejudices against them. But permit us to observe to you, sir, that you are very far from defending it as ably as the persons we have mentioned. It looks false, or at least uncertain in their hands, but it acquires a stronger tincture of these qualities in yours. So weak are your arguments on this opinion.

on does not all the 13 factors of

A degree of improbability which the learned critick adds to the opinion which he maintains.

If, as you affert, fir, the Hebrews borrowed the rite of circumcifion from the Egyptians, they would certainly have used it in Egypt. This Le Clerc and Marsham held agreeably to our facred writings. But you, fir, who do not always repose a confidence in these writings, know not where or when the Jews began to use this rite; you vary with and contradict yourself in this respect, in the most palpable manner; all that you know, and all that you affert against the testimony of our facred writings, and against the opinions of those learned men whose decision you adopt, amounts to this,

A Text.

Text: as all notice to a send a send of the conse

"The Jews did not receive circumcifion in " Egypt." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

Comment.

Therefore the Jews, who according to you borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians, did not borrow it during their long residence in Egypt! They lived uncircumcifed for two hundred and five years among the Egyptians who were circumcifed, and they did not adopt this Egyptian rite until forty years after their leaving Egypt, when they were no longer dependants on the Egyptians, and had no intercourse with them!

Text.

" The foreskin was a subject of scandal " among the Egyptians." (Ibidem.)

Para Dia diciliane Para Pri

Comment.

The Hebrews therefore, who were flaves in Egypt, had a strong incitement to follow the example of their mafters; and yet, according to you, they did not imitate them; they lived two hundred and five years in the scandal of the foreskin, and did not get themselves circumcifed until the foreskin was

no longer a subject of scandal! Can you, who find so many things above your conception, conceive this, sir?

But, perhaps, fir, every one will not conceive it in like manner; some people will think that this obstinacy of the Hebrews to remain two hundred and five years in a scandal which they could avoid, is not very proble, and that this is one degree more of improbability added to the opinion of Le Clerc and Marsham, which was already not very probable.

when dinar sile reprise a site and bade

He contradicts one of the proofs alledged in favour of that opinion which he supports.

Text.

"Is it probable that the powerful and ancient Egyptian people borrowed this cuftom from a little nation which they detefted? (Ibidem.)

Comment. - Part of the control of T

This argument may have weight in LeClerc and Marsham, &c. but it loses it in some degree in your writings. You do not every where speak so advantageously of the Egyptians.

tians. You feem to have forgot this, fir; we must remind you of it. This is what you say of them;

Literal Sell Jan W Text. They nov h had

- "The Egyptians have been much extol-"led; I scarcely know a more contemptible." "people." (Philosoph. Dict. article Apis.)
- "The Egyptians, a people at all times "contemptible." (Treatife on Toleration.)

Eventure were an together be true. If the

This is not the way to persuade us, sir, to think that the Jews borrowed the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians. We generally imitate a nation which we respect, not a contemptible one. You see, sir, that this contradiction destroys your argument.

Upon the whole, we cannot but admire here with what ease your imagination serves you according to your wish, and how it can give to objects those colours which you want for that instant.

If it is faid that our fathers may have got fome tincture of the arts and sciences, as they were brought up in the Egyptian schools, then immediately the Egyptians are the most contemptation.

Vol. II.

Cuxumethan Egyptians, Nr. Aut.

temptible people, at all times a contemptible people.

But if you want to shew that the Egyptians borrowed nothing from the Hebrews, then the Egyptians are a great people, an ancient and powerful nation, and Egypt a flourishing kingdom for many ages (1) before Abraham went into it, &c.

Yet, fir, it is hard to conceive how these affertions can all together be true. If the Egyptians were an ancient and powerful nation, they were not a contemptible people; or if they were a people at all times contemptible, they never were a powerful nation, or a flourishing kingdom. Contradiction will not effect conviction.

tradiction deflroys your prgument.

He supports himself with the authority of Herodotus, and overturns it.

After the example of Le Clerc and Marsham, &c. you support your opinion with the authority of Herodotus, a Pagan historian, a Greek, not quite a cotemporary writer, but who

⁽¹⁾ Before Abraham went into it. See Philosophical Dictionary and Philosophy of History, articles Abraham, Circumcition, Egyptians, &c. Aut.

who wrote however about one thousand four hundred years after circumcifion was appointed among the Hebrews, about one thousand years after Moses. This authority, as we see, would be of weight; but unfortunately you do not act as Le Clerc and Marsham have done, for you do every thing in your power to weaken this authority. This Greek is according to you,

Whom? The Egyptites We may protest against the columns of this people, who is

he had confuled

" A flory-teller, a relater of ridiculous fa-" bles, only fit to amufe children and be " compiled by rhetoricians." (Philof. Dict.) nations, and of having learned: (1) nothing from them. Was training icfle? You affert

that every thing he heard from the Egyptian Such, fir, is the exact and veritable hiftorian, (this name you give him thro' derision) whom you oppose to the Pentateuch, the book of loshua, and the whole tradition of the Jews, Arabians, and Christians. Such you tell us, is the value of his testimony. moder to

But you add, " altho' Herodotus fometimes " tells hear-fay stories, yet,"

Nothing I am them. Ital. Telliment, an excellent were. We requell of it

"When he fpeaks of what he has feen, " of the customs of nations which he has " examined " examined, concerning antiquities which he has looked into, he fpeaks rationally."

on low as , vivod Comment. . soloM 15

Basicont one mode ,eword

unfortunately you

Very well, fir, but had Herodotus seen the appointment of circumcision among the Hebrews, or even among the Egyptians?

No, you answer, but he had consulted. Whom? The Egyptians. We may protest against the testimony of this people, who is foolishly infatuated with its chimerical antiquities, and ridiculously jealous of the character of having been the instructors of other nations, and of having learned (1) nothing from them. Was it their priests? You assert that every thing he heard from the Egyptian priests (2) is false.

Seriously, fir, what credit can we give to a foreign writer, of much later date, who produces none but interested witnesses, and of whom you strive so hard to give us (3) a bad opinion?

Sy ashiolivil 6. 4. He

⁽¹⁾ Nothing from them. See Defense des livres de l'Ancien Testament, an excellent work. We request of Mr. de Voltaire to resolve to read it. Aut.

de Voltaire to resolve to read it. Aut.

(2) Is false. See the Melanges, vol. IId. ch. 47. Aut.,

(3) A bad opinion. See Supra. Aut.

Kall Walk and are the care the will be the light

of init tollen \$. 4.

He gives a bad translation of that passage of Herodotus which he quotes.

Let us now see how you translate Herodotus, after having spoke of him in terms so favourable, and fo proper to gain him the confidence of your readers. In order to fhew you at one glance how faithful and exact your translation is, we shall place on one fide of the page what Herodotus fays, and on the other what you make him fay,

What Mr. de Voltaire What Herodotus fays. makes him fay.

The Inhabitants of It feems that the Colchis feem to me of inhabitants of Colchis Egyptian extraction; came originally from which I collected rather Egypt; I judge of this from my own experience, from myself rather than than the information of from hear-say. For I others. And tho' upon found that when a inquiry I found more person was interroevident marks of this gated at Colchis about relation among the Col- the ancient Egyptians, chians than in Egypt; these were better rememyet the Egyptians say, bered at Colchis than the they believe them to ancient customs of Colbe descended from a chis in Egypt.

part!

Thefe

What Herodotus fays. | What Mr. de Voltaire makes him fay.

part of the army of Sefostris; which I think These inhabitants of probable, because their the borders of the Poncomplexion is fwarthy, tus Euxinus pretended and their hair frizled, to be a colony fettled tho' no certain proof; by Sefostris. For my for others are so like-part I guessed it, not wife. But that which only because they are weighs most with me swarthy and have their is, that the Colchians, hair curled, but because Egyptians, and Ethio-the people of Colchis, pians are the only na-Egypt, and Ethiopia tions of the world, who are the only people on from time immemorial earth, who have prachave been circumcifed. tifed circumcifion at all For the Phœnicians, times. For the Pheand those Syrians that nicians and those of Painhabit Palestine, ac- lestine confess that they knowledge they re-have taken circumcifrom the Egyptians, ans. The Syrians, who As the other Syri-live at this time on the ans, who possess the banks of Thermodon countries adjacent to and Pathenia, and the the river Thermodon Macrons their neighand Parthenion, with bours, confess that they their neighbours the bave lately conformed to Macronians, confess they this Egyptian custom. very lately learned the same custom from the Colchians.

circumcifion from the Egypti-

What Herodotus fays. | What Mr. de Voltaire

Colchians. And thefe tians in the use of this well nov od an mont in this usage, of circircumcifing their chil-

Littlebury's Herod. Vol. 1. p. 193.

dren.

makes him fay.

are the only nations By this chiefly they are that are circumcifed, known to be originally and imitate the Egyp+ Egyptians.

ceremony. But whe- With regard to Ether the Ethiopians thiopia and Egypt, as had this usage from this ceremony is very the Egyptians, or these, ancient among these on the contrary, from two nations, I cannot the Ethiopians, is a tell which of the two thing too ancient and borrowed circumcifiobscure for me to de-on from the other: termine. Yet I am however it is probainclined to believe that ble that the Ethiopithe Ethiopians took up ans got it from the this custom by conver- Egyptians, as on the fing with the Egyptians; contrary the Phenicibecause we see that cians have abolished none of those Phoeni-the custom of circumcians, who have any cifing their new-born commerce with the infants fince they have Grecians, continue to had any communicaimitate the Egyptians tion with the Greeks.

Comment. autoposed in the

If it is proper to be exact and faithful in the translation of any passage, it is more especially so when we appeal to it as an authority, and pretend to draw consequences from it. Do you think, sir, that you have rendered the text of Herodotus faithfully, and that you have not made him say more than what he says? Let us enter into particulars.

I judge of this from myself rather than from hear-say. The meaning of Herodotus is, that by the (1) features of resemblance which he perceived between the inhabitants of Colchis and the Egyptians, he conjectured that the people of Colchis came originally from Egypt, and that this thought arose in him before any one had spoke to him of their Egyptian extraction. This is evidently the sense of the words porespor naresas, but either you have not perceived this sense, or you did not think proper to give it. This is already one instance of your want of exactness. Here follows something still better.

At

The sale of the second section is a second s

⁽¹⁾ Features of resemblance. These features were not confined to their swarthy complexions and curled hair. Herodotus mentions several others, such as the language, the manners, the method of working flax. Edit.

At Colchis they remembered much better the ancient Egyptians, than the ancient customs of Colchis were remembered in Egypt. did you find these ancient Egyptians, sir, and the ancient customs of Colchis? The text of Herodotus mentions neither.

And what do you mean by your ancient customs of Colchis? The ancient customs of Colchis, which, according to your author, was an Egyptian colony, must have been the customs of Egypt. What, fir, did they not remember in Egypt the customs of Egypt? They did not remember in Egypt, in the time of Herodotus, circumcifion, which the people of Colchis had taken from Egypt, and which the Egyptians used in the time of Herodotus? Alas, fir, how you make Herodotus reason!

ments he come is in the interest of the area Your ancient customs of Colchis therefore are not only a want of exactness, but a false fense; they are, we ask your pardon, a vacuum of sense, or to use a strong English phrase, as you admire the English, they are non-fenfe.

These inhabitants of the borders of the Pontus Euxinus pretended to be a colony settled by Sesostris. The inhabitants of the borders of the Pontus Euxinus, is an elegant periphrafis to denote the Colchi; but observe, fir, that read intractional bearing

you ascribe to the Colchi what your author says of the Egyptians. In Herodotus, it is the Egyptians who pretend that the Colchi were a colony settled by Sesostris; there is some difference in this, especially if we take into consideration the vanity of the Egyptians.

I gueffed it, not only because they are swarthy and have their bair curled, but because the people of Colchi, Egypt, &c. Here, fir, Herodotus obferves that the fwarthy complexion of the Colchi and their curled hair, do not prove that they were of Egyptian extraction. (1) This proves nothing he fays, THTO ES HOLEN avener. Why do you suppress this observation; it is curious and interesting; it results from this that Herodotus did not fuspect what you hold for certain, that the refemblance of hair and complexion or the difference of them is a sufficient proof that men are of the same or of a different race. This is a great and mighty discovery in natural history, for which we are indebted to you; altho' this observation, which you suppress, may have been difagreeable to you, fir, yet it might please others,

⁽¹⁾ This preves nothing. It must then be for want of thought, or with intent of turning Herodotus into ridicule, that the illustrious author assures us (Philosophy of History, article Egypt) that Herodotus took the people of Colchis to be of Egyptian extraction, because they had a fwarthy complexion and curled bair. Edit.

thers, and you ought not to have concealed it from them.

The Phenicians and those of Palestine. The Greek says, and the Syrians of Palestine. Thus Herodotus describes the Jews, with whose name he was scarcely acquainted; this shews what a clear knowledge he had of the origin of their customs!

Confess that they have taken circumcisson from the Egyptians. How did Herodotus know this? Had he consulted them on this subject? Does he say that he had this confession from themselves? No, sir; and therefore we may justly except against it.

The Syrians who live at this time on the banks of Thermodon and Pathenia. It should be Parthenia; this is a typographical error, which ought to be corrected in the new edition; we inform you of it, sir, for it has passed from your Philosophical Dictionary into the book called Raison par Alphabet.

Egyptian custom. The Greek says, this custom of the Colchi; thus in order to establish your Egyptian notions, instead of the Colchi you put down Egypt. It is impossible to translate an author more exactly; you may hereafter be a pattern to faithful translators!

If

If those Syrians of Thermodon and Parthenius were really Syrians, who had been removed out of the kingdom of Damascus by the kings of Assyria, and sent to the extremity of the empire, their confession will prove nothing against the Jews; and if they were, as some of the learned think, part of the ten tribes which were carried off by Teglat Phalazar and Salmanazar, can we conceive that these Israelites, who had practised circumcifion for so many ages, could say that they had borrowed it from their new neighbours the Colchi?

By this chiefly they are known to be originally Egyptians. You just now mentioned the Colchi, the Syrians of Palestine, the Syrians of Thermodon, and their neighbours the Macrons. Do you affirm, fir, that all these nations descended from the Egyptians, and that Herodotus has faid it? He conjectures that the Colchi did, but he does not affirm it of the Syrians of Palestine, nor of those of Thermodon, nor of the Macrons their neighbours; he only fays that by the practice of circumcision, those nations seemed to imitate the Egyptians, φαινονται ποιθντές κατα ταυτα, which certainly cannot fignify that they were of Egyptian extraction. This then is a contrary fense. This is the foundation of your opinion! But, fir, contrary fenses are no proofs. This This mistake surprized us at first, sir, but when we discovered the cause of it, our surprize ceased; it lies in the Latin translator, whom you sollow blindly, and who misleads you. Here then you are taken in the very sact, and you can make no defence; you translate Herodotus just as you do our sacred writings from the Latin translation. Now, that a man should pretend to understand Greek, Hebrew, &c. &c. and yet translate from a Latin translation, without ever looking into the original. . You feel, sir, what might be said of such a man; this suffices; we are Jews and must be silent, but many christian criticks (1) would not be so tame.

The Phenicians have abolished the custom of circumcifing their new-born infants. We might with good reason contest this sense, that των επιγινομενων signifies new-born infants; and maintain that it signifies no more than children born to the Phenicians since their connexion with the Greeks; or perhaps it signifies this only, and probably still better, their children; this seems to be the meaning of Herodotus, and you very improperly substitute another in its room.

But

d-on the public, is your kinds-

⁽¹⁾ Would not be fo tame. See the Supplement to the Philosophy of History, the Defence of the Books of the Old Testament, &c. Aut.

But we must observe to you, that if it was the Phenician custom to circumcife newborn infants, this might be another proof that they took this rite from the Hebrews, and not from the Egyptians; for the Hebrews used to circumcife their newborn infants, but the Egyptians waited until their children were thirteen or fourteen years old, to get this operation performed on them.

from a Latin translaters without ever icol .

He contradicts Herodotus in a principal part of that recital on which he founds his opinion, the expedition of Sefostris.

That Herodotus, who looks upon the expedition of Sefostris into Colchis as an undoubted fact, should believe that the Colchi descended from the Egyptians, is not matter of astonishment, these two opinions have a mutual connexion; the one explains and establishes the other. But is there not room for amazement, when we see you on one hand in the Philosophical Dictionary referring us to the authority of Herodotus, with regard to circumcision and the Egyptian extraction of the Colchi; and on the other, in your Philosophy of History denying the reality of the expedition of Sesostris? It is you say,

COMMENTARY. 239

older address of Text. and the whole

edi musupane ie i

sec M. the Two nemulpheres,

" A tale, a fable, such a story as that of "Picrocole in Rabelais." (Philosophy of History. Additions, &c.)

oloriw off and Comment.

You continue, fir, to treat the father of history, and his accounts in a very honourable manner! Still you use the same means to engage us to respect his authority, and acquiesce in his testimony.

Sesostris's expedition is a tale, a fable, &c. Might we be so bold, sir, as to ask you why?

-ibide you moth Texts of all of booth bur

"The northern nations conquered the fouthern, and not the fouthern the northmern." (Universal History.)

von would have made your heroes indulge then there in the the sale had,

This is a weak argument, which Herodotus would not have admitted, and which facts contradict, witness the Romans, the Arabians, &c.

Text.

" Herodotus relates that Selostris went out

" of Egypt with intent to conquer the whole world; now this design of conquering the "whole world is one of Picrocole's projects." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Yes, the project of conquering the whole world as you now fee it, the two hemispheres, the entire globe. But first, was the whole world known by the contemptible Egyptians? adly, It might be a ridiculous project to attempt the conquest of the world, of all the earth literally. But how could a writer of fo much taste and learning as Mr. de Voltaire, take a figurative expression literally? Every one knows that this phrase signifies no more than to extend conquests far; it is generally understood in this sense, without any absurdity; otherwise when you said that the disciples of Mahomet, after their first victory, hoped (1) to conquer the world, you would have faid an abfurd thing, which you could not do, or you would have made your heroes indulge themselves in such hopes as Picrocole had, which would be ridiculous.

noqUers a weak argument which Herod

would not have admitted, and which facts

⁽¹⁾ To conquer the world. See Universal History, vol. 1st, chap. 4. The illustrious writer himself explains this manner of speaking, to conquer the whole world, he says, that is, to conquer the neighbouring provinces. Now is this a ridiculous project in a powerful monarch to aim at the conquest of neighbouring nations, and to extend those conquests gradually? Edit.

Upon the whole, it is not our aim at prefent, to establish the certainty of the expedition of Sesostris; we shall only observe that Herodotus does not relate it rashly and without proofs; that he produces as witnesses not only the Egyptian priests, but also the monuments which existed in his time, and which he himself had seen, those statues, those pillars of which he speaks, loaded with inscriptions in Egyptian characters, &c. that his account is confirmed by Diodorus Siculus, and by a great number of ancient writers; and that criticks of the first rank look upon this expedition as a passage of history incontestible, (1) at least in fundamentals.

But if any one can invalidate the truth of this fact, it is not you, fir. Why? Because, refusing to believe Herodotus, when he speaks of the antiquities which he has examined, as he had examined this point of history, is contradicting yourself, and acting in direct opposition to your own affertions; because to Vol. II. Remaintain

⁽¹⁾ At least in fundamentals. This is the opinion of Abbé Mignot, in the last volume of the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres. There is also to be found in it an excellent differtation of Mr. Dupin, in answer to some difficulties proposed against this expedition by the learned author of the Origin of Arts, Sciences and Laws. See besides the Defence of Chronology against Newton's System, by Mr. Freret. We think that such authorities as these may very justly be opposed to that of Mr. de Voltaire. Aut.

maintain circumcifion and the Egyptian extraction of the Colchi, and at the same time to deny the expedition of Sefostris, is embracing an opinion, and denying that which makes it probable; because denying the expedition of Sefostris, and striving to explain circumcifion and the Egyptian extraction of the Colchi by a pretended invasion of this people into Egypt, as you do, is giving up most absurdly a probable and well-attested fact, for an empty notion, a vain imagination, devoid of any found proof; and lastly, because this pretended invasion, even were it true, would explain but ill (especially according to your principles) the origin of circumcifion among the Colchi; because then it would follow that the victorious nation adopted the manners of the conquered, which you think abfurd; and that they had adopted a painful rite, and according to you, a very useless one, which is incredible.

But this is enough, and perhaps too much with regard to Herodotus. You translate him ill, and you contradict him; you can therefore claim no advantage from him. Let us proceed to Josephus.

Il . 151 to noger till trafficers on the

of herefore this pretended expressional files, which you after the property is armillated or, if we done after a form at formathing work

He charges Josephus with a confession which be does not make.

One of the reasons which you have alledged to prove, that the Hebrews borrowed the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians, is a confession of Josephus.

Text.

" Flavius Josephus, in his answer to Ap-" pian, lib. 2. chap. 5. expressly confesses,

" that the Egyptians taught other nations

" the rite of circumcifion, as Herodotus wit-

" neffes." (Philosophy of History.) and of "

"connacifed, to be .tremmod 'saver of I tian priefts" (Philosoph Debonary)

No, fir, Josephus does not expressly confess that the Egyptians taught other nations the rite of circumcision; he quotes Herodotus without contradicting him, for this was not his object; but he makes no confession with respect to this; the only conclusion he draws from this passage of Herodotus is, that the Jews were not absolutely unknown to this historian, which seems true.

Therefore this pretended express confession, which you ascribe to Josephus, is a mistake, or, if we dare affirm it, something worse than a mistake.

of the realons which you have alledge

Other reasons which he alledges, confuted.

To the authority of Josephus, you add that of Clemens Alexandrinus.

Text.

"Clemens Alexandrinus relates, that when "Pythagoras travelled thro' Egypt, he was "obliged to get himself circumcifed, in order to be admitted into their mysteries. There- fore it was absolutely necessary to be circumcifed, to be of the number of Egyptian priests." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

No. fir, Josephus does not expressly con-

Yes, in the time of Pythagoras; but there is some distance of time, sir, between Pythagoras and Abraham. An interval of about one thousand two hundred years is certainly sufficient for the introduction of a rite into a country; and this rite after one thousand years had elapsed, might have been imparted to

to a stranger by the priests of Egypt, as being of great antiquity. But,

mobanish a cooled Text sol a red need bad governed by a nowerful king

Nothing pre-

" It was necessary to be circumcifed to be " of the number of Egyptian priefts, These " priefts existed when Joseph went into Egypt. " The government was very ancient, and the

" old ceremonies of Egypt were observed with

" the most scrupulous exactness." (Ibidem.)

Comment,

These priests existed when Joseph went into Egypt. But did they exist circumcised? The old ceremonies of Egypt were observed with the most scrupulous exactness, but was circumcifion one of those old ceremonies? These things you should have proved, fir, and you have not done it.

It is certain that Joseph was circumcifed when he went into Egypt; it is as clear that his brethren and their children were fo likewise, and that their posterity persevered in the use of this rite, during the whole time of their residence in Egypt; therefore they did not borrow it from the Egyptians.

they of his opposite with God, and

Specifica Dio sa Text. A very series of

"Abraham travelled thro' Egypt, which had been for a long time before a kingdom governed by a powerful king. Nothing prevents us from believing that circumcision was used for a long time in this ancient kingdom, before the Jewish nation was formed." (Philosoph. Dictionary.)

(intobied) Taken Comment.

Altho' nothing prevents us from believing this, yet nothing proves it. We require proofs from you, and you say nothing prevents. Truly this is a convincing fort of proof!

Nothing prevents. But have you confidered this, fir? That Abraham did not receive circumcifion till twenty years after his return from Egypt, when he was ninetynine years old. If he received this rite in order to imitate the Egyptians, why did he conform so late? Why did he not conform whilst he lived amongst them? Can any one conceive that in order to follow their example, twenty years after he had left them, he submitted, at such an advanced age, to so dangerous an operation? Or that he adopted, as a sign of his covenant with God, and as a distinguishing character of his posterity, a rite

a rite which was a long time used in a neighbouring nation? These reasons, sir, might prevent us from believing that circumcision was at that time used in Egypt.

Add to this, that it is faid in Genefis, that Abraham caused (1) all his slaves to be circumcifed, and that among them there were (2) some Egyptians; that the Philistines, an Egyptian colony, are called in the scriptures, (3) uncircumcifed; these are two facts from which we might conclude that circumcision was not practised by the Egyptians, either at all times, or in the time of Abraham. But,

Text.

"Before the time of Joshua, the Israelites, even by their own confession, took many customs from the Egyptians; they imitated them in many ceremonies, in fasts, ablutions, &c." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Without granting you, fir, that the Ifraelites, by their own confession, took those rites from

⁽¹⁾ All bis flaves. See Genesis, ch. 17. v. 27. Aut.

⁽²⁾ Some Egyptians. See Genesis, ch. 12. v. 16. Aut.

⁽³⁾ Uncircumcised. 1st book of Kings, ch. 17. v. 26. ch. 18. v. 24, &c. Aut.

from the Egyptians, which you point out, we will allow that they borrowed fome cuftoms from them. But is this a proof that they took a rite from them, which it is doubtful whether Egypt knew before them?

\$ 8.

Stewn Starts resons about the Start

That it is improbable that the Israelites borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians.

You have therefore produced no convincing proof that our fathers borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians. So far from rendering this opinion of Marsham's more pro bable, you have involved it in new difficulties. Your notions concerning the practice of circumcifion among the Hebrews are uncertain and false, your affertions concerning the Egyptians contradictory, the authority of Herodotus subverted by yourself, his text falsely rendered, a contrary meaning given to that of Joshua, the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus is foreign to the question, &c. Such reasons, fir, cannot counterbalance the regular tradition of the Jews and Arabians, two nations who, notwithstanding their hereditary antipathy towards each other, agree in looking upon this rite as instituted by their common father.

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To this tradition, let us add those texts of scripture in which the appointment of this ceremony is related, and those wherein it seems announced as a sign to distinguish the sons of Jacob from the Canaanites, the Philistines and (1) uncircumcifed Egyptians.

In short, this rite has among the Hebrews a clear origin, a reasonable motive, a constant usage; it goes up incontestibly to the common father of the nation; it has a reasonable motive, for it is the seal of God's covenant with the patriarch, and a pledge of the blessing of the Lord on his posterity; it has a constant usage, except during the forty years which they spent in the wilderness; the Jews have practised this rite without interruption, from the time of Abraham to this day.

Of the Egyptians so much cannot be said; the origin of this rite among them is so uncertain, that Herodotus cannot determine whether they took it from the Ethiopians, or the Ethiopians from them. You yourself confute the various motives for this strange ceremony which are ascribed to them, health, cleanliness, fruitfulness; and that which you substitute in the place of these, altho' it is more

⁽¹⁾ Uncircumcised Egyptians. All these texts have been quoted above. Aut.

more ingenious, is not more rational. Even the practice of this rite has varied so much among the Egyptians, that it is equally impossible to determine the time in which it began and ended; and that it is uncertain whether the whole nation adopted it, or when it did, or when it was restrained to the priests and the initiated only.

Is it probable, fir, that a nation which practifed circumcifion univerfally, invariably, constantly, during more than thirty centuries, thro' a motive which alone could render this practife reasonable, borrowed it from a nation, which used it so short a time with so many variations, and for so many foolish reasons?

§. 9.

From whence the Egyptians took circumcifion.

But you will fay, from whence then did the Egyptians borrow circumcifion? From whence you please, fir; it concerns us but little to know this, and we think that there can be little more than conjectures with regard to it.

Some of the learned affirm that the Egyptians received this rite from their priests, and that these priests got it from Joseph. It is certainly

certainly not improbable that the Egyptian priests imitated a rite which was used by a prime minister in favour, whose great wisdom they admired, and to whom they were indebted for the preservation of their property and privileges. This would not have been the case of masters imitating their slaves.

Others rather suppose, and we join them, that the Egyptians borrowed this rite from the Arabians, descendants of Abraham; for these Arabians ruled over Egypt for a time; and it is not wonderful to see the conquered people following the customs of their masters. The account of Clemens Alexandrinus gives still greater weight to this supposition, for he says that the Egyptian circumcision bears a much stronger resemblance to that of the Arabians than (1) to that of the Jews.

Such are our thoughts, fir, on the origin of circumcifion among the Egyptians and the Jews. Are you still fond of your opinion? Rest in it then. But if you want to persuade your readers to rest in it too, endeavour to support it with better proofs, and

⁽¹⁾ To that of the fews. The Jews circumcifed and do still circumcife their children the eighth day after the r birth. The Egyptians did it later as well as the Arabians, generally in the thirteenth year. Aut.

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and do not take away their force by contradicting them; but especially, as you rely on the testimony of Herodotus, speak better of him, and translate him more faithfully.

TENTH EXTRACT.

Of Solomon; of his elevation to the throne, and of the extent of his dominions.

If in your Philosophy of History, whilst you are speaking of the different Jewish states, you are silent with respect to Solomon, altho' he might have been brought in naturally enough, yet your readers are upon the whole at no loss; for we find a long article upon this king of the Jews in your Philosophical Dictionary.

You first allow, that Solomon was always revered in the East; that the works which are ascribed to him, the Annals of the Jews, the Fables of the Arabians have borne his name as far as the Indies, and that his reign is the grand period of the Hebrews.

But however the splendour of his reign, the high reputation of the monarch, the opinions of the Jews and Arabians are of little weight with you. If we believe you, this revered monarch was a bloody usurper, his vast empire a petty state, and the werks which are ascribed to him, are neither his (1) nor worthy of him. This is the substance of what you say of a king whose name has been blazoned thro' the world.

It would be tedious now to enter into all these particulars; and we are informed that (2) a learned christian is preparing a full answer to them; we shall therefore confine ourselves to some points which appear striking to us.

§ I.

Elevation of Solomon to the throne.

Was the elevation of Solomon to the throne an usurpation? This is your notion of it.

Text.

(1) Nor worthy of him. It is hard to conceive how writings, which are not Solomon's, nor worthy of him, can have raised his character so universally. The name of a great monarch, placed at the head of his works, may gain them celebrity, but it seems paradoxical that books, unworthy of a great monarch, should raise his character. We must request that the illustrious writer will solve this paradox. Edit.

(2) A learned christian. The Abbé Nonnote. We are affured that he will soon publish a complete resutation of the Philosophical Dictionary. If we may form a judgment of this suture work, by his excellent piece of criticism on the Universal History, it will be a very solid

refutation. Edit.

Text.

"Bethsabé prevailed on David to get her "fon Solomon crowned instead of his elder "brother Adonias." (Philosoph. Dict.)

Comment.

It was the opinion of the (1) great Bossuet, that in our nation, as well as in yours, kings succeeded one another in the male and elder lines; an order of succession, which he says, was (2) wisely instituted for the prevention of civil wars, and of (3) the dominion of foreigners in those states.

But you suppose that this order was so well established in the time of David, that the throne rightfully belonged to the eldest son, independently of the appointment of God, and of the father's will. This, sir, you should

(1) Great Boffuet. See his Politique facrée.

(2) Wifely instituted. The author of the Philosophical Dictionary thinks very differently from Bossuet on this subject, as well as on many others. If the people of France would follow his advice, they would soon reform the Salick law. See the Philosophical Dictionary, article Laws. Aut.

(3) The dominion of foreigners. The law forbad the Hebrews to take a king of any other nation. Non poteris alterius gentis bominem regem facere qui non sit frater tuus. This was a wife and necessary regulation among this peo-

ple. Edit.

should have proved, before you accused Solomon of usurpation and injustice; and it would be hard for you we think to produce good proofs of it.

It appears on the contrary, that David founded Solomon's right and his own on the choice of the Lord. Howbeit the Lord God of Israel (1) chose me before all the house of my father, to be king over Ifrael. And of all my sons he hath chosen Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Ifrael. The order of fuccession was, so far from being fettled at that time, that Bethfabé scruples not to fay to David, And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit (2) on the throne of Israel after thee. And in consequence of this, as foon as David had named his fucceffor, and that Solomon had been anointed by his order, all Ifrael acknowledged him as (3) their lawful king. Do you flatter

(1) Chose me.—(2) On the throne of Israel. 1st book of Chronicles, chap. 28. v. 4, and 5. and 1st book of Kings, ch. 1. v. 20.

(3) Their lawful king. Even fince the time of David fome of our kings chose for their successors, among the r children, others than their first born, and the nation acknowledged them as lawful sovereigns. When, therefore, Adonias says to Bethsabé, the crown belonged to me, he speaks of the common order of succession, and not of an absolute right or established law, which deprived the father of the right of appointing his successor. Edit.

flatter yourself with being a better judge of the right of succession to the crown in our nation, than the nation itself?

Text.

"She had art enough to get the inherit "ance given to the fruit of her adultery." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

We imagined that the fruit of Bethshabe's adultery had died a few days after its birth; and that the Lord, moved by the strong and sincere repentance of David, had legitimated this marriage, which commenced by a crime. More inexorable than the God of our fathers, you determine that the tears and sorrows of this penitent monarch deserved no fort of indulgence. Such is the rigour or rather inflexibility of your justice.

Text.

"Nathan who had gone to upbraid David
"for his adultery, was the fame man who
"feconded Bethfabé's application for placing
"Solomon on the throne. This conduct, if
"we only reason according to the flesh,
"would prove that this Nathan had, ac"cording to circumstances, divers weights
"and measures." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Yes, fir, Nathan had two measures, one measure of rigour against an adulterous and murdering king, and another of indulgence for a penitent and contrite sinner. Would he be more equitable who would appoint the same measure for a crime, and for repentance after having committed it?

§. 2.

· Death of Adonias.

His death you think unjust, sir, and in order to prove it such, you say,

fi acrost side to the Text.

"Adonias, after he was excluded from the throne by Solomon, asked him as a singular favour, permission to marry Abisag, that young Girl which had been given to David to keep him warm in his old age; and the scripture says, that merely for this request Solomon caused him to be affassinated." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Asked him as a singular favour. But observe what the eloquent Bishop of Meaux says, "This favour was of infinite consequence Vol. II. S "from

" from the manners of this people; in these "manners Adonias was forming a new title

" to the crown. Why do you not ask the "throne for him, (says he to Bethsabé) he

" is already the eldeft? &c."

Merely for this request. No, sir, the scripture had already shewn the haughty character of Adonias, the project he had formed of seizing the crown without the king's confent, or rather against it, and even during his father's life, his connections with Joab, a dangerous man, of whom David had often had just reason to complain, &c. Therefore it was not merely for this request to marry Abisag, that Solomon caused him to be put to death; it was on account of this request, added to the knowledge of his cabals and pretensions which he wanted to strengthen by this new title.

Text.

"Probably God who had given him the gift of wisdom, denied him then the gift of justice and humanity. (Ibidem)

Comment.

When you charged Solomon with the want of justice and humanity, did you possess the gift of discretion, sir?

Far

Far be it from us, fir, to justify crimes. If Solomon caused his brother to be put to death, without just reasons of personal security, or for the good of the state, (1) he was furely guilty. But are you fure that he had none of these reasons? Consider, sir, that according to the manners of that age and country, if the defigns of Adonias had fucceeded. (2) Solomon and his mother would have been in the highest danger. And how can you tell but this facrifice, which must have rent Solomon's heart, was offered up for the tranquillity of his country, and the peace of his fubjects? The character of Adonias, the number of his partizans, his past intrigues, and his late attempt might have caused Solomon to fear, if he had spared his life, the involving his people in the horrors of blood and civil war; the justice and humanity of kings often oblige them to be fevere.

We think that if you had reflected on these things, you would not have been so hasty in condemning a great and wise monarch, whose reasons and secret views you was not acquainted with.

S 2 (mebidly ".o.s. 3

(1) He was furely guilty. We shall not deny that some commentators censure Solomon, but they give different reasons from Mr. de Voltaire's, and these reasons have always appeared very weak to us. Aut.

(2) Solomon and his mother, &c. See 1st Book of Kings, ch. 1. v. 12, and 21. Save your life and that of

your son, says Nathan to Bethsabé, &c. Aut.

of and set of reduced by Archier to be perfored form-

Fer be in from us, fir to guilify comes

Extent of Solomon's dominions. bed ed led

You add, fir, that the scripture contradicts itself in speaking of Solomon's dominions.

(2) Solumpn and his merter would have been in the highest danger, And how can you fell

" It is faid, in the third book of Kings,

" that he was master of a great kingdom, " which extended from the Euphrates to the

" Red Sea and the Mediterranean." (Ibidem.)

his particants his past intrigues, and

nompled bolters a Comment. Transite stal aid to fear, if he had found his life, the invelve-

All this is faid, fir, and all this is true. But you add, qual han cailled add par a his orven oblige them to Text.

""Unfortunately it is faid at the same time, " that the king of Egypt had conquered the " country of Gazer in Canaan, and that he " gave the city of Gazer to his daughter as " a portion, whom, they fay, Solomon mar-" ried." (Ibidem.)

(1) He was furth guildy. We thall not deay that forms commentators centure.tnammod but they give different realizes regar May de Velte gas ende facts crafting have

Unfortunately for you, fir, you fometimes fee contradictions where there are none, and you you Nathan to Exhabe, &c.

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you often do not see them where they are really to be found.

When the Hebrews conquered Palestine, the Canaanites of Gazer remained in possession of this city, but however still as their vassals and tributaries; the scripture expressly says it; they had lived thus under David, and did so now under Solomon; Gazer therefore had been part of his dominions, before the king of Egypt (1) (probably with Solomon's consent) besieged it, and took it. After this victory Pharaoh gave up his conquest to the king of Israei, whom he constituted by this cession proprietor in chief, instead of Lord Paramount; and this cession made by the king of Egypt was really part of his daughter's portion.

Whom they say Solomon married, &c. We maintain it from our annals. Have you any proof to the contrary, sir?

Text.

"There was a king at Damascus, the kingdoms

⁽¹⁾ Probably with Solomon's consent. We imagine that after David's death, the people of Gazer thought it a fit opportunity for shaking off the new king's yoke, and that it was in order to affish him that Pharaoh, his ally and father in law, laid siege to this city. Aut.

" kingdoms of Tyre and Sidon were in a "flourishing state." (Ibidem.)

comment. Comment.

Yes; but the kingdoms of Tyre and Sidon, tho' powerful by fea, possessed only a Cape on the continent; and the king of Damascus, having been conquered by David, had been tributary to him, and was fo now to Solomon; these two Jewish kings kept garrisons in Damascus; they were masters of this country as far as the Euphrates, and possessed it so fully, that Solomon caused the famous city of Tadmor or Palmyra to be built there; therefore the king of Damascus, and the kingdoms of Tyre and Sidon did not prevent Solomon's dominions from extending from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, and from Arabia deserta to the Mediterranean. Now we do not think this extent of country fo fmall a state; some celebrated nations have had fmaller dominions.

But you will ask, are these mighty conquests of David credible? How can we believe, for instance, that,

Text.

origami ov.

"Saul, who at first had but two swords in his whole dominions, soon raised an "army

" army of three hundred and thirty thou-

" fand men. The Turkish Sultan never had

" fuch numerous armies; they were fuffi" cient for conquering the whole world."
(Ibidem.)

Comment.

An army of three hundred and thirty thoufand men. You have been often told, fir, that in these ancient times, every man who could bear arms was a soldier; therefore an army of this number was not a thing so impossible and inconceivable as you imagine.

The Turkish Sultan never had such numerous armies. It feems, sir, to be a long time since you have read the history of the Turks; but do you never get news-papers read to you?

They were sufficient for conquering the whole world. The world! This is saying much, fir; the world is very large.

You have made so many agreeable and ingenious jests on the project of Sesostris, and on the hopes you give the Jews of conquering the whole world! And now you begin to talk in their style of conquering the world!

Lothodd and truft Text. Be died the abriday

"These contradictions seem to exclude all "kind

" kind of reasoning; but those who wish to " reason find it extraordinary that David,

" who succeeded Saul after he was van-" quished by the Philistines, should have

" been able, during his reign, to found a " vast empire." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Those who wish to reason, &c. But, fir, is it reasoning to think it extraordinary that the successor of a king, defeated in battle, should have gained many victories and conquered many provinces? This is pronouncing a fact incredible, of which there are a thousand instances in history. How many nations, after learning the art of war by defeats, have triumphed over their conquerors!

Should have been able during his reign. But this reign was long; David's conquests were the fruit of forty years battles and victories; is it impossible that a warlike king, by so many labours and victories, should have extended his dominions?

These contradictions seem to exclude all reafoning. And will not such reasonings at last exclude all faith? Beware, sir; the public begins to be clear-sighted, and to be weary of having been so long the dupe of a great name;

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name; it is gradually withdrawing a confidence which it too freely gave.

ELEVENTH EXTRACT.

It feems, fir, you are refolved to dispute Solomon his *Proverbs*, as well as his dominions.

We do not pretend to fay that this work is entirely Solomon's; the very title of the two last chapters shews the contrary; and we are fenfible that many learned men look upon it only as a collection of fentences and maxims extracted, for the most part, out of this prince's works; and for the remainder out of feveral other inspired writers. We may boldly affirm that this collection was made by the prophet Isaiah, by Helcias, or as you say, by Sobna, Eliakim, Joachim, &c. under the reign of the pious king Hezekiah. We fee nothing in all this but truth, or at least probability, nothing but what your readers might learn, and which you have very probably learned yourfelf in Don Calmet's comment.

But you go a step farther; you undertake to prove that this work is unworthy of Solomon, and that it was composed in Alexandria. Let us now see, sir, your soundation for these two affertions.

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Whether the Book of Proverbs is a work unworthy of Solomon.

You begin in these terms,

Text.

"This work is a collection of trivial, low, incoherent maxims, without tafte, choice or defign." (Philosoph. Dict.)

Comment.

A collection of low, trivial, incoherent maxims. But first, altho' some two or three sentences, which you quote, were low, what conclusion could you draw from these against so many others? Can one judge of such a work, as he would of a piece of stuff, by a pattern? If we were to judge in the same manner of your works, if we were to quote some bad lines, some flat jests, and thence conclude that the whole is unworthy of a great poet and an excellent writer, would you think this fair dealing?

Besides, what may appear low and trivial to some persons in certain languages, and certain times and countries, may very possibly bly not have appeared so in other countries, times, and languages. Very little reading will convince us of this. Homer alone can supply us with many such instances. How many thoughts, images, and descriptions are there, which in his time and language were noble and elegant, but would now appear low in yours! But antient writers are not to be tried by your language and manners, but by their own language, by the customs and manners of those ages and countries in which they lived. We have often said this, and you yourself have often repeated it!

In short, sir, men of taste, writers who were judges of style, and who had the advantage of being able to read the Book of Proverbs in the original, have given a very different opinion of it. These maxims, in which you can find nothing but what is low and trivial, feem to them to be written with a poignant precision, in a pure and elegant ftyle, and adorned with fuch fentiments, images, and comparisons, as were proper for fixing them in the minds of those readers, for whose instruction they were intended. Fenelon and Boffuet have paffed this judgment on it; and if you want foreign authorities, Louth and Michaelis, criticks whose taste and learning you cannot object to, are of the same opinion. Thefe

are engines to inftruction.

These maxims are incoherent. A fine discovery indeed, and just ground for censure! Surely every one knows that in this work, especially after the nine first chapters, the didactick order is not observed, and that we find in it no divisions, definitions, argumentations, in short no logical method. But was this needful? Solomon did not propose to write a dry, cold philosophical treatise; he was writing for young people of both sexes, who love variety, and are sooner taken by detached thoughts which strike them, than by long-winded tedious reasonings.

You find these maxims incoherent; but do you see more coherence in the sentences of Theognis, Phocylides, Cato, Publius Syrus, &c.? And have you less value for these compositions, or do you think them unworthy of their authors, because they were written without method, or collected by chance?

Maxims without choice, taste, or design. It is true they are not written in the taste of certain modern thoughts; but is this modern taste the true one? And is it so exclusively to all others? Solomon's thoughts are neither epigrammatical nor high-flown; he does not assume the tone of an oracle, nor wrap himfels up in the darkness of ambiguous diction. Was it his duty to do so? His object was to instruct, and he knew that perplexity and obscurity are enemies to instruction. As

As to the want of defign, which you charge this work with, altho' all its parts are not connected by a regular and uniform plan, yet a common object unites them, and this object, urely worthy of a wife and great prince, is fo clear, that it cannot be overlooked; it is to train up his young readers to piety, prudence, an exact observance of every duty, in a word, to instil the fear of God into them, and to lead them to happiness by virtue; and in the midst of these great views, you come and cavil about the want of regularity in the plan, as if you did not know that this fort of regularity, fo much cried up by the moderns, was for a long time neglected by the ancient moral poets, even the Romans and the Greeks. A Carebalet Day

You must allow, sir, that there is much shallowness, and very little solidity in all these objections.

But here follows fomething more ferious,

- or lot and book new Text. Have a crob rods

"We find whole chapters which speak of "nothing but of strumpets, who invite passure fengers to lie with them. Would Solomon have said so much of the prostitute?" (Ibidem.)

But

ect to this antwer.

Syrodo nov douly Comment. Jean od of A. this work with altho, all its pacts around con-

Why not speak of the prostitute? He does it to warn men against her wiles, to point out the shameful and pernicious consequences of fornication, and to deter young men from plunging into that abyss. Is this a design unworthy of the wife? in a word, to influt the feat of Cost auto

-niv vo aborigged of Text is best of bore amount

tue, and in the middle of their great success " Can we conceive that a learned monarch " could write a collection of maxims, amongst " which there cannot be found one that re-" spects the manner of governing, politicks, " the customs of a court, the character of courtiers?" (Ibidem.)

House at organ ! Comment: volle flour go Y

Malloweels, and very little foldstyline all these We might previously answer you, fir, that as Solomon wrote many books, he perhaps treated in some other one of politicks, the customs of a court, the character of courtiers; that therefore it would have been needless to repeat the fame things in this one; that his fole object here was to give some general precepts to youth of virtue and wisdom, and that according to this plan it was unnecessary for him to speak of politicks and government; we cannot fee how you could reasonably object to this answer. memority one enemier to instruction.

But

But is it very certain that in this collection of fentences, there is not really one which respects government, politicks, &c? You affirm it, fir, and we will venture to deny it. Of what kind are the following maxims, When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice, but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn. Righteousness exalteth a nation. The king by judgment establisheth the land, but be that receiveth gifts overthroweth it. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness. In the multitude of the people is the king's glory. The prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor. If a ruler bearken to lies all bis servants are wicked; that is, they are unjust, void of truth, enemies to the publick good? Do not these maxims respect the manner of governing?

The eloquent Bossuet has made this remark in that noble presace which is at the head of his work on the book of Proverbs. "We find, he says, so many sage maxims of "policy and government in this book, that we "easily discover in it the wisdom of a king "highly accomplished in the art of governing." You see, sir, this is quite the contrary of what you say. Whence then this opposition between you and this learned presate? It proceeds from this, that Bossuet speaks of this

this work, after having studied it, and you speak of it probably without having read it, or at least after having read it with so much haste and negligence, that you do not even know the contents of it. And is it after such a superficial perusal, that you take upon you to decide whether it is worthy or unworthy of Solomon? Really, sir, you are a very extraordinary critick!

§ 2.

Whether the book of Proverbs was composed in Alexandria.

But perhaps you may have better fuccess in proving that the book of Proverbs was composed in Alexandria.

naxims respect the mer of governing?

"Would Solomon have faid, look not on the wine when it appears clear and sparkles in the glass? I very much doubt whether they had drinking glasses in Solomon's time; it is a very late invention, and this very passage shews that this Jewish rhapfody, as well as many other Jewish books, was composed in Alexandria." (Ibidem.)

galace this and week

My terchiq bemish side bas nov abouted to establish forment.

To miffels in Comment. 200 000 section

Pardon us, fir, if we say that here is a great deal of learning thrown away.

Ist, If it is certain that the invention of drinking glasses is of very late date, and that they were first known in Alexandria, it is not sufficient to doubt whether they had drinking glasses in Solomon's time, for they certainly had none; you know it well.

2dly, But what would you think if, merely to puzzle you, we should maintain, that you have no certainty that drinking glasses were first known in Alexandria? And really, sir, this affertion would not be altogether ungrounded. We could tell you, that altho' learned men have held, that the transparent cups or bowls, which the Greek ambassadors saw at the Persian court, a long time before Alexander, were of amber or porcelain, yet others have maintained, that they were of glass; that glass, according to the account of many (1) ancient writers, Pliny, Vol. II.

⁽¹⁾ Ancient writers. Most ancient writers ascribe the invention of glass to an happy chance; they tell us that some merchants who dealt in nitre, having gone on shore on the banks of the river Belus, and being willing to dress their food, for want of stones, used large pieces of nitre to support their wood and their pots; that this nitre having taken fire dissolved itself in the sand, and thus formed

Tacitus, &c. was invented in Palestine, on the borders of the river Belus; that the first materials used for making it, were the sands of this river, which slows at the foot of mount Carmel, in one of our tribes; that Isaiah speaks of it, Ezekiel alludes to it; that even in Solomon's time they made inlaid sloors of it in the Mosaick way; and that to go up still higher, it was not unknown in the days of Moses and Job, &c. If it was needful, proofs at least plausible, (i) of all these affertions might be produced to you.

If ylbgle you, we hould maintain, that you

formed the first glass. This is nearly the same account

that Pliny gives. Lib. 36. ch. 26.

tainty that drinking claffes were

Fama est, (says he speaking of the river Belus,) appulsa navi mercatorum nitri, cum sparsi per littus epulas pararent, nec esset cortinis attollendis sapidum occasio, glebas nitri e navi subdidisse, quibus accensis, permixtà arenà, transsucentes novi siquoris stuxisse rivos, & banc suisse originem vitri.

Tacitus also speaks of the glass houses of the Sidonians, and of the sands of Belus. Et Belus ammis, (says he) Judaico illahitur mari circa cvjus os collectæ arenæ, admixtô nitrô, in vitrum incoquuntur.... Sidon artifex vitri, vitri-

ariis officinis nobilis. History liber, 5th, &c.

It was believed for a long time, that glass could not be made without the fands of Belus. According to Josephus, vessels were to have been freighted with it. This false supposition, which it was the interest of the Tyrians and Sidonians to encourage, made glass for a long time exceedingly dear. Edit.

(i) Of all these affertions. See the learned Differtation of Mr. Michaelis, vol. 1H. of the Memoirs of the Academy of Gottingen, on the antiquity of glass among the

Hebrews

adly, It is not necessary to enter into such deep enquiries, to overturn your argument; one reflection suffices, and it is this vour argument supposes, that in the original text, a drinking glass is meant, a cup or bowl of glass. Now altho the French translations and the vulgate, have rendered the Hebrew word by glass, yet this word fignifies neither a drinking glass nor a cup of glass, but a cup or bowl of any fubstance. Therefore your pretended demonstration amounts to this: "The French translations and the vulgate " render this passage by glass; now drinking " glasses were first known in Alexandria, there-" fore the Hebrew text, which does not fpeak " of glass, was composed in Alexandria." Thus from French and Latin translations which speak of glass, you draw a conclusion against the Hebrew text which does not mention it. Did any one ever reason thus, fir? See what

Hebrews. He observes in it, that Ezekiel places a sea of glass under the throne of God, in allusion to that magnificent sea of glass, with which the place was paved where Solomon placed his throne; that Isaiah, speaking of the city of Tyre, and Moses, of the Tribes of Islachar and of Zabulon, boast of the treasures bidden in the sands of their shores; by which he understands, with the Caldack interpreters, Jonathan, Solomon Ben-Islac, Le Clerc, &c. the wealth which would flow into them from the manusactures of glass, in which they used the sands of the river Belus. Lastly, that the words Zag and Zaguchit, which are found in Moses and Job, are rendered in all the oriental versions, by a word which signifies in those languages, glass. Aut.

danger there is in playing the critick on a work without inspecting the original, or without understanding it. The notes in

argument Tuppoles, that in the original text.

We had good for any when upon comparately the comparate or a second comparately the comparately ring the Dictionaire Philosophique, with the Raison par Alphabet, we found these words at the bottom of the page, who was a start of bow

a with king glass not a cup of gula but a cup or bowl of any full half.

"A certain pedant thinks he has disco-" vered an error in this passage; he pretends " that we have ill translated by the word glass " a goblet, which was, he fays, of wood or " metal" (Raison par Alphabet.)

noidw snorth and bar done'd mort from Comment.

A certain pedant! We are not acquainted with this author or with his work; but to judge of him merely by what you fay, we cannot but suppose him a man of learning, who does not translate from the vulgate, but confults and understands the text.

A certain pedant. They fay that in your language this is a word of abuse. The abusive style is a bad one. We are forry to see you falling into it so often. Practice as you preach, fir. Substitute at last good reasons in the place of invectives.

A certain

A certain pedant thought. No, fir, he did not think he had found its for he really found it; and it is not a flight miffake, but a groß blunder. It is a misfortune, that a pedant fhould be right, and Mr. de Voltaire wrong! And yet this little accident has often happened to you.

taldog as ni sharq's saiw salt bluos word cartadw (asbitadubank fyboows no latem not bloud be placed at the head of your stram."

TWELFTH EXTRACT

Are not you aware, fir, that by this affertion you affirm, that no ancient people could tell whether their wine sparkled or was bright? For according to you, they drank out of cups of wood or metal. And do you think, fir, that even your cotemporaries, who drink out of golden goblets or filver cups, cannot distinguish whether their wine is bright and sparkles? radian are satisfable and they are all and the parkles and the parkles are need to never the content of the country of the c

And besides what matter. Certainly we are as indifferent about this matter as you are; but we think that this salse translation of the Hebrew

Hebrew word is of some consequence to you, for if the word does not signify glass, your pretended demonstration dwindless into an argument equally false and ridiculous Perhaps you are very indifferent about this matter, and so are we. In truth, what matter?

No, fir, it matters not to us. We know at last your secret, fir, you have disclosed it, and it has reached us. Abbé, I must be read, no matter whether I own believed? It is this then your motto, fir? May it at last be known to all those who read you, and are kind enough to believe you! Had we known this secret sooner; we might have saved ourselves the trouble of writing to This motto should be placed at the head of your works.

TWELFTH EXTRACT.

Are not you aware, fir, that by this afcealed tell whether the could tell whether the cou

There are no difficulties which you propose against our facred writings with greater confidence, than those which you take from some calculations that may be found in them. And yet these difficulties are neither new non unanswerable. You have not been at great trouble to find them out; you have not been obliged to turn over the leaves of Woolston and Toland, Bolingbroke and Collins, &cd

&c. Two or three commentators, perhaps Calmet alone, your old mafter, supplied you with them. All you had to do was just to copy them over, to season them with some strokes of humour, and to suppress the answers. And this is really all you have done in treating of the riches of Solomon, of his horses, &c. &c. in your Philosophical Dictionary, and in other places. We propose to be more impartial, fir, for we will produce the answers without attempting in any degree to weaken the difficulties.

the fum left to Solomon by David amounts to twenty-five thousand fix hundred forty-

by Of the wealth left to Solomon by David.

millions. There is therefore in this latter account an abatemental five rhouland fix

David, whose predecessor had not even iron, left his son Solomon twenty-five thousand six hundred forty-eight millions of livres in specie, according to our common computation. (Melanges.)

"Could Solomon be fo rich as is faid? (1)
"the Chronicles affure us that the + Melk
"David

⁽¹⁾ The Chronicles. Here follows the text according to the vulgate, Ecce ego in paupertate mea præparavi impensus domins domins auri talenta centum millia, & argents mille millia talentorum. Chronicles chap. 22. v. 14. Aut. † Melk signisses a petty king.

" David his father, left him (1) about twenty

"thousand millions of our money, accord"ing to the common computation, and the

"most moderate calculation. There is not

"fo much ready money on the face of the carth; and it is hard to conceive how

"David could lay up fuch a treasure in the

" finall country of Palestine? (Diction. Phil)

ended impartial attended we will end ed

We shall first observe that in the Melanges, the sum left to Solomon by David amounts to twenty-five thousand six hundred forty-eight millions, and that in the Dictionary it amounts only to about twenty thousand millions. There is therefore in this latter account an abatement of sive thousand six hundred forty-eight millions of livres; this difference deserves well to be noted; a fifth more of less is a considerable thing in a Sum.

most moderate calculations is followed. This is a proof that the former one was not very

⁽¹⁾ About twenty thousand millions. In the Treatise on Toleration, Mr. de Voltaire reduces the sums lest by David to nineteen thousand and fixty-two millions, although includes in this the sums which this prince's officers contributed towards the construction of the temple. All these variations evidently shew that these calculations are uncertain. Aut.

moderate. It is also a proof that all these calculations are (1) not of indisputable evidence. We also the state of the calculation of the calcula

But suppose your valuations owere just, althout his might be disputed; we will grant too, that you have a perfect knowledge of the exact value of those talents of which the vulgate speaks in this place, which is doubtful; let us grant you all this, fir, and what will follow, that it is incredible that David could leave such a sum to his son? But who obliges you to believe it? It has a least grant of the country and the country who have a second to the country who have a second to the country when the country we have a second to the country when the country we have a second to the country when the country we have a second to the country when the country we have a second to the country when the country we will be a second to the country when the country we will be a second to the country when the country we will grant to be a second to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will grant to the country when the country we will be country with the country when the country we will be country with the country when the country we will be country with the country when the country we will be country with the country will be country with the country when the country we will be country with the country when the country we will be country with the country will be country with the country will be country with the country will be country with the coun

These twenty thousand millions appear to you an enormous, an exorbitant sum. You are right, and we join you in opinion; such a sum would suffice to build a temple of (2) massly silver; at least it would suffice to build several hundreds of temples such as that of Solomon, especially is it was such a temple as you representated no of sould and we salur

But observe, sir, that the grosser the mistake is, and the more glaring the absurdity, the only in the work was even in the most cele-

met makes the sum lett by David amount only to about ewelve thousand millions, Aut.

¹⁽²⁾ Of massy filter. And yet as Mr. de Voltaire observes this sum less by David, was not sufficient for Solomon, who was obliged to borrow gold from Hiram besides. Aut.

the less likely it is that it should come from an author to whom one cannot but grant, if not inspiration, yet at least some knowledge. Is it probable that a fensible writer could make David fay, (a prince whose predeceffor he knew as well as you had not iron;) that he had laid up according to his poverty twenty thousand millions in specie, that is, according to yourself, more ready money than there let us grant you all the blrow slodwish nisi follow, that it is incredible that David could

When fuch evident mistakes, with regard to numbers, are found in profane writers, they are generally not charged with them, if they are known to have been authors of the least knowledge or veracity an Every critick will in this cafe think it his duty to aforibe them rather to the neglect or linattention of the copier, than to the (1) stupid weakness of the writer. And why would you not practice the same equity, and follow the same rules with respect to our facred writers foy as are told that in this lair account You

at oblerve, afre that the groffer the mif-

⁽¹⁾ Stupid weakness of the writer. These mistakes may be found not only in ancient writers, whole works have been so often copied over, but even in the most celebrated modern writers. Basnage supplies us with an extraordinary inflance of this. It is faid in his History of the lews, that the Spanish Jews upon their expulsion, carried away with them thirty thousand millions of ducats. This is written in letters not numbers, and is not correcled in the errata; would any reasonable man impute this exaggeration to Bafnage rather than to his Dutch printers? Edit.

because probably the copiers sometimes used letters, according to our custom, in lieu of numerical figures, to denote numbers, and that the Hebrew letters according to you (1) are easily consounded.

This at most, that the copiers have made a mistake in this text of the Chronicles. But who says that there have not been mistakes in our sacred writings? Every body allows to and you have lost much time in proving what (2) nobody doubts, a tud, and you are says to a tud.

mi With respect to the rest, sir, in the time of David, as well as now, it was usual for the monarchs of Asia to lay up treasures against the time of need, or for the purpose of excepting some plan then in prospect. They all and we believe the sew shows and were all and we believe the purpose of exceptions of the purpose of exceptions of the purpose of exceptions of the purpose of the purpose

It would perhaps be a subject not unworthy the en-

help allowing this in his Treatife of Toleration. See

And and redied we standed. We might add, in order to them that this is a millake of the copiets, at, That in this part of the Hebrew text, the grammatical confirmation is very irregular, or at least extraordinary. 2dly, That in the Arabick version, they reckon one thousand talents of gold, and one thousand of filter, which shews that there is a different reading in the Arabian translator's manuscript, from the manuscript which the author of the sulgate used. And this gives room manifestly for suspecting an alteration in both manuscripts. Edit.

were unacquainted with (1) the new principle of modern governments, that it is better for princes to be poor, and to let all the ready money circulate thro' the nation. Therefore it is not furprising, that as David had long formed the defign of building a superb temple for the Lord, during many years of a prosperous reign, after so many victories gained over so many nations, from whom he had carried off rich spoils, he should have been able to lay up, and leave to his fon confiderable fums. For notwithstanding what you fay, fir, this Melk David was not a petty king, but a powerful monarch. And when you circumscribe his dominions, withni With refined to the reft, fig. in the time

(1) The new principle. The contrary principle was that of Sixtus Quintus, and Henry the IV, whose views were certainly as wife as those of our modern political economists. This principle was also adopted by the late king of Prussia. The present king has profited well by it.

of David, as well as now it was plual for the

It would perhaps be a subject not unworthy the enquiries of the learned to investigate whether there was not in ancient times as much gold and silver in proportion in the world as there is now. It seems that their possessing in ancient times so many golden sands, so many nivers which rolled gold, so many mines which they sound out and worked, might render the question at least problematical. It is impossible to read Don Calmet's differtation on the texts which we are examining, without confessing that in those ancient times, kings, temples, and certain cities, must have been amazingly rich. Mr. de Voltaire observes himself in his Treatile of Toleration, that the reader is assonished at the riches which Herodotus says he saw in the temple of Ephesus, But does this assonishment entitle us to deny the fact? Edit.

in the fmall country of Palestine, you wish to forget that this victorious prince had fubdued many neighbouring nations, and extended his dominions from the Euphrates to Esiongeber, and from Efiongeber to Egypt. This was fomething more than the finall country of Palestine. our pains, we cannot

for these forty thousa \$ 2. auch-limites there

fame number of ceasing and the

after a great elect of Immount oburthall Of Solomon's Horses,

ioffer when it thell arbein that the prainfared the patter of the date on Kings from

"Solomon had forty thousand stables, and fo many coach houses for his chariots, twelve " thousand stables for his saddle horses, &c. " Commentators confess that these facts want " explanation, and fuspect that the copiers " have committed fome errors in the nume-" rical figures." (Melanges, Vol. 5th of the Geneva edition, chap. 1st.)

"Solomon, according to the third book of " Kings, had forty thousand stables for the " horses of his chariots; suppose each stable " contained but ten horses, this would have " made up the number of four hundred thou-" fand horses, which added to his twelve "thousand saddle horses, makes up four " hundred and twelve thousand war horses. " This is a great deal for a Jewish Melk, who " never "never waged war. There are few inflances of fuch magnificence in a country which

" feeds nothing but affes, and in which there

" are at this time no other beatts of burthen;

but probably times are changed." (Philof. Dictionary, article Solomon) and aminor and article Solomon of article Solomon of the solomon of th

Comment.

Here is a great deal of humour; but shall we not have reason to laugh a little at the jester, when it shall appear that he translates this passage of the third book of Kings from the Latin of the Vulgate, and that even this very Latin he does not, or will not understand, as he speaks of coach-houses which no body can find in it, and takes stables for horses, &c. This is just what you do, fir.

You translate from the Vulgate, fir; this is evident, and this is wrong; for when we criticize an author, it is not fair to form a judgment of him by a bad translation; now such is the Vulgate according to your own confession.

But even the Latin of the Vulgate, fir, you do not understand. We read there in the third book of Kings, chap. 4. verse 25. Et habebat Solomon quadraginta millia præsepia equorum currilium, & duodecim millia equestrium.

at counte us to depy the fact? Dist.

equestrium. This is not Cicero's or Livy's Latin; it is what you call somewhere, barbarous Latin; and yet it is not altogether unintelligible. We can plainly see in this passage, that Solomon had forty thousand stables for the horses of his chariots; but notwithstanding all our pains, we cannot find the same number of coach-houses. You added, fir, these forty thousand coach-houses; there appears not the least trace of them, either in the Latin or the Hebrew; to you only Solomon is indebted for them.

This is odd enough; but this is not all; you are not more successful in translating the remainder of the passage, & duodecim millia equestrium. These words signify, according to you, in your Melanges, twelve thousand stables, and according to you again, in the Philosophical Dictionary, twelve thousand horses. Is not this, sir, taking stables for horses, or horses for stables?

Now if we suppose with you, that these twelve thousand stables, in the Melanges, contained each ten horses, we shall have the sum of one hundred and twenty thousand saddle-horses, which added to four hundred thousand chariot-horses, will make up five hundred and twenty thousand war-horses; now this

it groundists. It the shuthrous writer and taken the

aldacates to kind, as to teleproper resolves of the

this calculation (1) differs somewhat from that in the Philosophical Dictionary.

Your liberality towards Solomon, sir, is amazing; you have just given him forty thoufand coach-houses, which the scripture does not mention, and here you make him a prefent of twelve thousand stables for his twelve thousand saddle-horses; you suppose probably that each of Solomon's horses had a separate stable; such is the idea you form to yourself of the economy of this wise prince.

It is true, we must allow it, that this whole Latin text is not very clear; we might absolutely doubt whether by these words, duodecim millia equestrium, we should understand twelve thousand war-horses, or twelve thousand stables for them. We cannot even tell whether the author of the Vulgate by prase-pia means stables, and it is not clear that this word, taken in this sense, is a just translation of the corresponding Hebrew word. Open (2) Bochart, sir, there you will find that the

(1) Differs fomewbat. This contradiction is very flight; the difference is only one hundred and eight thousand.

tained each ten horfes, we half have t

⁽²⁾ Bochart. Mr. de Voltaire has been accused of sometimes pillaging the works of this learned man, without quoting his name; we believe that the charge is groundless. If the illustrious writer had taken the trouble

Hebrew expression may perhaps signify only the place, or as father Houbigant says, the stall of each horse.

Therefore the very obscurity of this pasfage should have given you some distrust of your objection; and in fact, what advantage can you gain by an obscure text so ill understood?

But still further; this passage of the third Book of Kings, not only in the Latin, but also in the Hebrew, does not agree with the parallel paffage in the Chronicles. It is faid in this latter, that Solomon had, not forty thoufand stables for the horses of his chariots, as the Book of Kings fays, but forty thousand chariot horses in his stables; and also that he had twelve thousand saddle-horses in his stables, and not, as you make the Book of Kings fay, twelve thousand stables for his faddlehorses. Such a remarkable opposition between these two texts, added to the improbability of the calculation in the Book of Kings, shews clearly that there has been some alteration of the copiers in this, and perhaps even in both all brown solved it haroften

I alcline it is because the frequent use of wo'll wo'll collect

trouble of going up to this spring, he would have learned there what we have now said; and probably he would have been so kind as to inform his readers of it. Edit.

You say jestingly, that they alone could be mistaken; and you say the truth, especially in this case; for to what other cause but their negligence, hurry, or even if you will, their soolish vanity, which prompted them to exalt Solomon's character, could this enormous difference in calculation be ascribed between two writers, who seem to have been perfect masters of the subjects which they treated, and to have copied from authentick memorials? Agreeably to this, most of the best criticks, Jews and Christians, reduce Solomon's saddle-horses to twelve thousand, and his chariot horses to forty thousand, some even to four thousand.

Now we think, fir, it would be hard for you to shew that this prince could not possibly keep sifty two thousand horses. Besides Palestine, Solomon was master of part of Arabia Petræa, and of Arabia deserta, and you are sensible that in these regions horses are common and very good; that they are one of their staple commodities in trade; that cavalry formed anciently, and still forms a considerable body in the armies of those war-like nations. If horses were less common in Palestine, it is because the frequent use of them was forbidden (1) by religion and wise policy,

Sherlock has shewn that there was a motive of religion for

policy; but this country could feed horses, witness the cavalry and chariots of war of the Canaanites, which probably were not drawn by oxen; witness the traffick of horses which Solomon carried on, his cavalry, his chariots of war, and those of his successors. If you think that Palestine feeds nothing but affes, and that there are now no other beafts of burthen in it, you are greatly mistaken again; modern travellers will tell you, that faddle-horses are not uncommon there. Perhaps then it may not be so impossible as you think for Solomon to have had fifty two thoufand horses.

But if this number still appears too great for a Jewish Melk, nothing hinders you to reduce the number of horses (with the learned of whom we have been speaking) to fixteen thousand. You may chuse out of these calculations the one you like best; and if you think it proper, you need not adopt any of them. Neither your divines nor ours damn people

for this prohibition given to the Jews, of keeping a great number of horses. The legislator wanted to make the Hebrews, when they were in battle, place their confidence in the Lord, rather than in the multitude of their horses and chariots. Hi in curribus & in equis, nos autem in nomine domini. See his Treatise on Prophecy.

The political reason for this prohibition was, that in fuch a country as Palestine too great a quantity of horses might have hurted population, one of the lawgiver's great objects. Aut.

people for this. When the text is altered we are under no obligation to believe in it.

\$ 3

Of the riches which were brought to Solomon by the Ophir-fleet.

Text.

"His fleets brought him annually fixtyeight millions in pure gold, without reckoning filver and precious flones."

Comment.

These sixty-eight millions also amaze you, fir. But besides that you are by no means certain that your valuations are just, what proofs have you that the trade of Ophir was not worth that sum to Solomon? Ophir was a country rich in gold; it was then with respect to Solomon, what the country of the Alileans has been since for some time, to the people who bordered (1) on Arabia, and what Peru has

⁽¹⁾ On Arabia. We read in the Bibliotheca Photiana an extract from a work of Agatharchides, where this writer relates, that the country of the Alileans abounded fo much in pure gold, that they generally found pieces of it as large as the stones of olives or medlars, and even as nuts. That the inhabitants mixed them with transparent

has been fince to the Spaniards. It is faid in our feriptures that Solomon made gold as common in Jerusalem as stones. This oriental figure, which you will not certainly take literally, shews at least that during this prince's reign, gold became very common in that capital; and this is a proof that the trade of Ophir was not so unprofitable as you think it.

If notwithstanding these considerations this fum feems rather exaggerated, if it is necesfary to allow some mistake here, would it be agreeable to the laws of true criticism to ascribe it to learned and faithful writers, rather than to copiers, who are often absent and negligent? Our books have passed thro' so many hands and so many ages, that it cannot feem wonderful that fome mistakes may be found in them. God certainly has not permitted that any material alterations should have crept in, any errors destructive of the purity of doctrine or morals; but it was not absolutely necessary that no inaccuracies of transcribers should be found in it upon objects foreign to religion and morality. And what matters it to either of these that David should have left more or less money to his fon? That !. enomolog is of their inperfittions and excels-

parent stomake bracelets and necklaces of them; and that they sold it at so low a price, that they gave triple the weight in gold for brass, double for iron, and ten times the weight for filver. This is pretty nearly what passed afterwards at Peru. Aut.

Solomon should have had more or fewer horses? More or sewer stables? &c. &c. Will the religion which is revealed in our scriptures be, for such reasons, less noble, and its morality less pure? Is it not extraordinary that a writer who passes over all the absurdities of the Vedam and the Cormovedam, on account of some sine precepts which have probably been copied out of our sacred writings, should raise such slimity objections against these sacred writings, and trump up even the blunders of transcribers?

THIRTEENTH EXTRACT.

Of the Book of Wisdom. Of some mistakes of the learned critick, and of something more than mistakes.

Altho the Book of Wisdom, which your church inferts into the canon of inspired writings, is not received into our canon, yet our masters esteem it, and quote it with respect.

The author, whoever he was, feems to have lived among idolaters; and having been eye-witness of their superstitions and excesses, he did not hold the same opinion of idolatry that certain modern pretended philosophers do, who extol it, who regret the happy æra of it, and who would wish to bring it

back for the good of the world. He goes up to the rife of this false worship; he shews the vanity and madness of it, and describes the cruelties, the impurities, and all the crimes of which it was, and is still the baneful source.

These considerations prompt us to stop for a moment, and to consider what you say of this book.

§ I.

Of the Author of the Book of Wisdom. This book is ascribed, according to the learned critick, to Philo of Biblos.

Text.

"To Phylosof Bubloss

d havesbeen ic

"This book was not written by Solomon;
it is generally ascribed to Jesus the fon of
"Sirach" (Philos. Dict. article Solomon)

Lews: the found, .trammoD denny at learned few identified bearing with his left testione va-

This book was not written by Solomon. Who knows not this, fir? All the commentators observe it.

We cannot tell whether among christians, it is generally ascribed to Jesus, son of Sirach; but this opinion is not common amongst

mongst us. Many of our learned, and even fome of yours, ascribe it to another writer. who they think was an Hellenistick Jew, pretty well acquainted with the language and opinions of the Greeks; they believe him to have been one of those whom Ptolemy employed in translating our facred writings; but they agree that there is nothing certain with respect to this author, his name, or the time in which he lived.

Text.

Author of the Book of Will "Others ascribe it to Philo of Biblos." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

To Philo of Biblos. There have been feveral Philos, fir, known by their writings; three amongst the rest, the first and most ancient, whom Josephus mentions in the lift of those Pagan authors, who have spoke of the Jews; the fecond, more modern, a learned Jewish philosopher, who has left us some valuable works; the third, Philo of Biblos, another Pagan writer, of whom we have nothing but fragments. and having worldo

It is certain that some criticks amongst you have held, that our philosopher of Alexandria was the author of the Book of Wif-Regions and who would with to be dom,

COMMENTARY.

dom, and the folidity of their proofs is well that of Philo the Jew, or of Philo of Brwons

But this book could never be afcribed by you or any one else, except in a very absent. moment, to the grammarian of Biblos. What relation could you possibly see, sir, between the Book of Wildom, in which Paganism is combated, and Philo of Biblos, the Pagan translator of the Pagan Sanchoniatho?

tury of the christian geral Does one your reasoning shew, that it who proves too much

An odd notion of the learned critick; he makes the Pentateuch posterior to the Book of Wif-· dom. proved and demonstrate

Here is a still more extraordinary absence of mind, if it can truly be called fo.

the Pentateuch was posterior to the Book of Text.

Wildom.

"Whoever was the author of this book, " it appears that in his time they had not yet " the Pentateuch." (Ibidem.) 55781556131

Comment.

What, fir, they had not the Pentateuch in the time of the author of the Book of Wifdom, whoever he be! They had it not in the equitier place, he speaks of the patriarch jo-

" feph

time of Jesus the son of Sirach, nor even in that of Philo the Jew, or of Philo of Biblos!

Jefus, fon of Sirach, wrote about two hundred years after Efdras; Philo the Jew, in the first century of the christian æra; and Philo of Biblos, in the fecond, Therefore, if we believe you, they had not the Pentateuch two hundred years after Efdras; they had it not in the first, nor even in the second century of the christian æra! Does not your reasoning shew, that he who proves too much proves nothing? Certainly, fir, when you compiled this article, you had loft fight of all your dates.

Sibm diffe sesboraHe Reasons alledged by the critick, to prove that the Pentateuch was posterior to the Book of Wisdom,

But we are mistaken, fir, there is no absence of mind in this case; this is a reflected, premeditated affertion, which you endeavour to prove,

This author fays in the 10th chapter, " that Abraham wanted to offer up his for " Ifaac at the time of the flood; and in an-"other place, he speaks of the patriarch Jo-" feph

" feph, as of a king of Egypt." (Ibidem, article Solomon.)

rodinescalt tentan Comment.

Ift, Even if the author had held this language, which you make him fpeak, would it follow from thence that, whoever he be, they had not the Pentateuch in his time? Can the blunders of one writer affect another, or prove for or against his priority?

Think of one of your best friends, the Abbé Nonnotte, the man to whom you have (1) the highest obligations, if you love truth, He has (2) proved and demonstrated to you, that in an hundred places of your Universal History you fall into gross blunders, and contradict preceding historians without reason.

(1) The highest obligation. It seems to us however, that the illustrious writer has as many obligations to many others, we could name at least twenty. Christ.

author, preferved the fift formed la-

taire. A work necessary to all those who wish to read the Universal History, and not be the dupes of the mistakes and little arts of the illustrious writer. This work has already gone thro three editions, notwithstanding the indecent resentment of Mr. de Voltaire against it and its author. Will people never see, that the best answer that can be made to a fair piece of criticism, is to correct one's errors, and not to give abusive language?

Can these mistakes prove that in your time there was no History of France?

adly, But, fir, is it certain that the author of the Book of Wisdom has committed the two mistakes which you produce as proofs? The air of assurance with which you impute them to him may deceive some readers. We find it hard to conceive that a celebrated writer, who ought to reverence himself, even if he did not respect the publick, should forget himself so far as to alledge, considently such manifest salfehoods. But when we read the text of the author we are convinced that this charge has not the least shadow of soundation.

Here follows first the passage which speaks of Abraham; we shall produce it entire, and after the Vulgate version. "Wisdom, says " the author, preserved the first formed fa-" ther of the world, that was created alone, " and brought him out of his fall, and gave " him power to rule all things; but when the " unrighteous went away from her in his an-" ger, he perished also in the fury wherewith " he murdered his brother; for whose cause " the earth being drowned with the flood, "Wisdom again preserved it, and directed " the course of the righteous in a piece of " wood of finall value; moreover the nations " in their wicked conspiracy being confounded,

" ed, she found out the righteous and pre-" ferved him blameless unto God, and kept

" him strong against his tender compassion " towards his fon."

What, fir! is it in this text that you find that Abraham wanted to offer up his fon at the time of the flood? If the mistake was real, it would be extraordinary, and full as good as that of making Philo of Biblos the author of the Book of Wisdom. But in truth, is there one word in this passage which could raise such an idea, or give the least pretence for a charge of fuch a gross anachronism? Is it not clear on the contrary, that the author places this facrifice long after that dreadful catastrophe, when the nations, almost losing remembrance of God's threatenings, gave themselves up to every kind of abomination?

You add, fir, that in another place the author of the Book of Wisdom speaks of Jofeph as of a king of Egypt. Let us fee the passage. "When the righteous was fold, "Wisdom forsook him not, but delivered " him from fin, she went down with him " into the pit; and left him not in bonds "'till she brought him the scepter of the " kingdom, and power against those that " oppressed him; as for them that oppressed " him, she shewed them to be liars and gave " him perpetual glory."

HOY

You ground your charge probably on these words, the scepter of the kingdom; but it is very plain that these words have not that abfurd fense which you are pleased to give them. No one was ever mistaken here but yourself. Any one may see at first fight that it is unreasonable to take figurative expressions literally; that nothing more is meant here than the power of a favourite minister, with whom his fovereign entrusts his confidence and authority; that it would be ridiculous to ascribe to an author, who appears in other respects well informed, such gross errors upon fuch flight grounds; fuch shocking ignorance as would difgrace not only Philo, or the fon of Sirach, but the lowest of the Jews.

If in like manner we were to take literally fome strong expressions, which you use in speaking of Cardinal Richelieu, and say that you made a king of France of him; if we were to conclude farther from this, that you are little acquainted with the history of your country, or that your country had no annals before Lewis the sisteenth, would you think such arguments worthy of a place in a philosophical work? And would you not think it a favour done to the reasoner, to suppose him only absent in mind? No, such reasonings would not be mere mistakes, they would certainly be something worse than mistakes.

create your civil was ap fauntally. Julies

FOURTEENTH EXTRACT.

Miscellaneous observations. Mistakes and giddiness of the learned author on different subjects.

When a man has a warm imagination, and writes hastily on subjects of which he is not master, it is very difficult for him not to fall into mistakes. For this reason, sir, you have fallen into many, when you have undertaken to speak of our history, our facred writings and our laws, &c.

We have already pointed out many of these mistakes; we shall now lay more of them before you, which will not appear less extraordinary. They are of such a nature, sir, that you will be obliged to confess, either that you are exceedingly giddy, or that you never read with care those divine writings which you criticise.

never heard once the so need any inter-

that there were look over thomas out of

The Book of Joshua, and others placed in the Pentateuch.

We do not misrepresent you, sir, these are your own words; no feel and to shot additional and the short additional additional and the short additional additional and the short additional additio

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You glound you Text.

"The Books of Moses, of Joshua, and the rest of the Pentateuch." (Philos. of Hist. article Moses, page 189.)

When a man in the comment and against on a madwice and white the dependence on the breeds of which the had a manufacture of the comment.

Moses, you add here that of Joshua and others to the Pentateuch. Where then was your attention, sir? You must have forgot even the derivation of the word Pentateuch. For if you had had the slightest recollection, you would have perceived that this collection contains no more than the five books of the lawgiver, and that neither the Book of Joshua nor any other were ever comprehended in it. Will you not allow, sir, that altho' the mistake is of no great consequence, yet he must have been very giddy who committed it? Here follow some more of the same stamp.

2. Second Tollary and and and

Cherubims of Solomon placed in the ark, and feen by the Romans.

The title of this section may perhaps furprize you, as probably you do not think that you ever said any such thing, but we shall. quote quote your own words faithfully, judge of this matter yourfelf.

ninonal Text. Julia and bus and

the extremity of one wing to

"Solomon got twelve oxen carved, upon which stood the molten sea; cherubims are placed in the ark; they have an eagle's head and a calf's head; and it was probably this calf's head, coarsely made, and found in the temple by the Roman foldiers, that was the cause of the general persuasion that the Jews worshipped an ass." (Treatise of Toleration.)

Comment.

Here are many anecdotes which would never have been known, if you had not been fo good as to inform the publick.

Cherubims are placed in the ark. We knew, fir, that there were some over the ark, but never heard that there were any in it. The scripture does not say it, or rather it says quite the contrary. This is the great advantage of reading you; one always learns something new.

You must permit us however to doubt that Solomon's cherubims were placed in the ark; we even think that it would have been Vol. II X impossible

impeffible to put them in it. The ark was a cheft two cubits high, and one and an half broad; and the cherubims were ten cubits high and ten cubits broad, reckoning from the extremity of one wing to that of the other; therefore they were not made to be put into the ark. This is another flight mistake of yours.

It was probably this calf's bead, coarfely made and found in the temple by the Roman foldiers, that was the cause of the general persuasion, &c. Neither the ark, fir, nor Solomon's cherubims with coarse heads of calves had existed for a long time, when the Romans conquered Judea. They did not go into Solomon's temple, which no longer existed, but into the second temple; but they certainly did not see either the ark or the cherubims in this temple, for they never had been in it.

Apollonius, confuted by Josephus, speaks of this ridiculous opinion of the Pagans on the Jewish worship; he throws back the rise of it to the time of Antiochus, who, according to them, found an ass's head of gold in the temple of Jerusalem; other Pagan authors ascribe it to causes still more ancient. There is therefore some probability, sir, that this opinion was prior to the invasion of the Romans, and that it did not owe its rise to the calves heads of Solomon's cherubims, which

which it is pretended that these conquerors found in the temple.

We cannot tell why in another place you change the calf's head of the cherubims into an ox's head; this change it is true is not very material. We understand however that a calf's head coarfely made, may be taken for an afs's head, whilst on the other hand it is hard to take an ass's head for that of an ox, even coarfely made; oxen have horns and affes have none, nor calves neither.

In short, there were not cherubims in the ark; those of Solomon could not go into it; they were not feen by the Romans; the opinion that the Jews worshipped an ass's head, was prior to the invasion of these conquerors. All these affertions, which unfortunately for you are true, contradict yours plainly. Confess, fir, that in this absent hour you have committed many blunders.

Of the books, which according to the learned critick, are the only law of the fews.

We have just read over again your letter from a Quaker to a Bishop. This Quaker, who pretends to instruct a man from whom it would become him to receive instruction, Sharm

X 2

makes rambling differtations, quotes the English writers, produces the objections of some of them, and the answers of others, &c. he is a man of learning, but you allow him to commit some mistakes. For instance,

Text.

"In the Decalogue, in Leviticus, in Deu-"teronomy, which are the fole law of the "Jews." (Letter from a Quaker, &c.)

Comment.

Surely this French Quaker is absent. What! do the books which he mentions make up the fole law of the Jews? Does he not know, or does he forget that Exodus contains, besides the Decalogue, the greatest part of our principal laws; that the Book of Numbers contains also many of them? With all his learning, sir, your Quaker is but a bad scholar, or a very giddy man.

What is extraordinary is, that speaking in your own name, you have made the same mistake, with respect to the same object. You say,

Text.

"In Leviticus and Deuteronomy, that is in the Jewish laws, there is no mention "made

COMMENTARY. 300

" made, &c." (Philosophical Dictionary, article Angels.)

Comment.

You see, sir, this is just what your Quaker had said; you go even further than him; for altho' he does not reckon the book of Numbers among those which contain our laws, yet he brings in part of Exodus, and you, sir, cut out the book of Numbers and all Exodus. This is too much! You have had the same absence of mind in your Treatise on Toleration, &c. &c.

How happens it, fir, that you speak so much of our laws, without knowing the books that contain them?

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is cortain time who all the brother's refulai

The ceremony of taking off the brother-in-law's shoe. The shoe thrown at his head,

We have already faid that one of our laws ordered, that a widow left without iffue might require marriage from her husband's brother. This custom, which was more ancient than Moses, as we may see by the example of Onan, and which still subsists in some places of India and Persia, was founded on reasonable and wise motives; the object of it was to procure an establishment for the widow.

wob

dow, to perpetuate the name of the deceased, to multiply families, and to prevent property from falling into the hands of strangers.

When the brother of the deceased refused the widow's suit, she had a right to bring him before a court; there, in order to shew that he had forfeited his right of inheritance to the deceased, and that he deserved to walk like a slave baresooted, according to you,

Travey ai baim Text adids smil suit bei

" She took off his shoe, and threw it at " his head."

Comment.

It is certain that when the brother's refusal was proved in court, which refusal was looked on as unjust towards the deceased and opprobrious to the widow, she was, in token of contempt, to take off his shoe; but it is not said in any place, that she was to throw it at his bead.

This little compliment you have invented. Probably you thought that it would make fome of your readers laugh, and perhaps you had fuccefs. But what kind of readers are they!

f Moles had wrote Levicieus, woold he

Pretended contradictions between our laws.

You add, that our laws contradict one another.

Text.

"This law of Deuteronomy, which orders the brother in law to marry his brother's widow if he dies without iffue, contradicts that law of Leviticus, which forbids a man to uncover the nakedness of his brother's wife, that is, to marry his sister in law." Leviticus, ch. 18. v. 15. (General History.)

Comment.

This contradiction, which you think you fee, and which offends you, is not real. This verse of Leviticus is the general law; that of Deuteronomy, of which we have been speaking, is an exception from it; now an exception is not a contradiction. Mark this, fir, either you are absent or you equivocate.

After this short remark, it will be easy to answer an argument by which you endeavour to demonstrate, that Moses was not the author of Leviticus.

Comment

Peret.

Text.

" If Moses had wrote Leviticus, would he have contradicted himself in Deuterono-

" my? Leviticus forbids marrying the bro-" ther's wife, and Deuteronomy commands

" it." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

Comment.

To prohibit in certain cases, and to command in others, implies no contradiction; otherwise every legislator would have contradicted himself,

This argument therefore is no demonstration. We find in it a small want of attention, if not of logick.

It is again on account of this pretended contradiction between Leviticus and Deuteronomy, that you make the following reflexion.

ne of relief we have heen

"In these books (those of Leviticus and Deuteronomy) God seems, according to our weak comprehension, sometimes to command contraries, as a trial of man's obe- dience," (Universal History.)

Comment.

author of Levitiens.

Comment.

Weak capacities indeed are those which discover contradictions where there is not the shadow of them!

No, fir, it is only thro' the clouds of inattention and prejudice, that you fee any thing here that can be so painful a trial of man's obedience. in ... When America the foir of David, in-

You are a great mafter of irony, but you must perceive that you do not always place it properly. season was world beliefor a mindraling

mend me in mary 6, & from the king my fre ther, and he will not relule you." (Ibidem.)

Whether among the Jews it was customary for a man to marry bis fifter.

We have feen above, that marriages between brothers and fifters, of the same father. were expressly forbidden amongst us. We have quoted the Levitical law which forbad them; it is clear; and yet, fir, you affert that,

ous is nothing on in Text.

Among the Jews a man might marry his " fifter." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

hillory

which the hiw condemns, and of which the

Comment.

What must we think of you, fir, when we fee you afferting with fo much confidence a proposition so directly contrary to an express law? We must suppose that you have the strongest proofs to support it; let us see them.

tention and prejudice, that you lee any thing here that can be .txx. a trial of man's

" When Ammon, the fon of David, ra-" vishes his fifter Thamar, David's daughter, " fhe fays to him, Don't do any thing inde-" cent to me; for I could not bear the affront, " and you would pass for a madman; but de-" mand me in marriage from the king my fa-" ther, and he will not refuse you." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Whether among th

We shall say nothing of the burlesque air you give to an event which was the cause of fo many disasters. There are various classes of readers, perhaps these parodies may fuit the taste of some of them. But what astonishes us is, that you should coolly oppose the words of a young woman in confusion at the shocking affront which was going to be offered to her, to the precise terms of a clear law. Do these words, which dropped from her in her fright, fuffice to prove that a custom which the law condemns, and of which the history

history of our nation gives no example, subfisted among the Jews? You add,

. The control intended you conclude from

"This custom contradicts Leviticus a little, but contradictories are often reconciled."

Comment.

If this custom was proved, it would be not only a little, but absolutely contradictory to Leviticus. Now as it is certain, on the contrary, that it never subsisted amongst us, since the law prohibited it, where is the contradiction?

Observe, sir, how well your ironical reflexion is placed!

facility and bell tovo \$.7.7 not bear of factors

Of Benadab, and of the two women of Samaria.

We have just been reading, fir, an article of your Questions fur l'Encyclopedie, and it is certainly a very curious one. You return to the Cannibals in it, and you affert again, altho' with some restrictions, that our fathers were Cannibals, for as to us, you are so indulgent as to say that we are not so.

Text.

In order to prove your affertion, you once more produce the passage of Ezekiel quoted above; you insist again on these words, Ye shall eat at my table, and taking this metaphorical expression literally, you conclude from it, with an astonishing justness and strength of reasoning, that Ezekiel promised our fathers that they should eat the slesh of horse and man.

An author must have much courage to return ten times to the same subject. To make a sacred writer say, not once and en passant, but ten times over what he has not said, or rather the contrary of what he has said, is an invincible proof of candour, and of love for truth.

But, fir, altho' you have the front to repeat, do you think your readers have patience enough to read ten times over the same thing? Even if these were pleasing anecdotes, or important truths, it would be tolerable to hear them; but behold imputations grossly false, and interpretations as foreign from good sense as from the text! At last this will weary out the reader's patience.

However you do not confine yourself entirely within these bounds, for when you repeat a thing you generally add something new to it. You say,

Text.

testhelald offender Texts in nor meils guiden

you are elected british in duction is not not

" It is very certain that the kings of Ba-"bylon had Scythians in their armies. These

" Scythians drank blood out of the sculls of

" their vanquished enemies, and eat their

" horses, and sometimes human flesh."

Comment.

The Scythians drank blood out of the sculls of their vanquished enemies, and eat their horses, and sometimes buman sless, therefore the Hebrews eat human sless too; therefore Ezekiel promised them the sless of man and horse. These truly are not mistakes, but invincible arguments!

From these reasonings, you pass to the two women of Samaria, and you make a very curious reflexion on this shocking story.

-emod all no \$750d and Resignation master of confidential and the confidence Text. (187) which is a confidential and the confidence of the

"Some criticks maintain that this fact could not happen, as is related in the 4th book of Kings, chap. 6. verse 26. and

" the following." (Ibidem.)

Comment.

Some criticks. What criticks, fir? By not naming

naming them you give us room to think that you are the only critick in question.

However, let us fee how you and your criticks will shew that there is an error in the 4th book of Kings.

Text.

" It is faid in this book, that the king of " Ifrael passing by or over the wall of Sa-" maria, was thus applied to by a woman ; " Save me, O lord the king, and he replied, " what wilt thou? And she answered, O " king, here is a woman, who has faid to " me, give me your fon, we will eat him " to-day, and to-morrow we will eat mine. These criticks say, that it is not pro-" bable that king Benadab, whilst he was " befieging Samaria, should have passed qui-" etly by or over the wall of Samaria, to de-" termine disputes there between the Sama-" ritans It is still less probable that two " women could not be satisfied with one " child for two days; furely there was food enough in it for four days at least."

Comment. "gaiwollof odt

How deeply read in the scriptures your criticks are, sir! And how worthy of the confidence of their readers!

Damine

These

These criticks say that it is not probable, &c. No certainly it is not probable; it is utterly improbable. There cannot be any thing more absurd, than to suppose a king at war, besieging an enemy's city, and passing quietly by or over their wall, to determine disputes between the inhabitants.

But this absurdity, sir, is not in the fourth book of kings. The fourth book of kings expressly says, that it was to the king of Israel these two women applied. Must the book of kings be censured, because your criticks consound what that distinguishes, the king of Israel, with the king of Assyria, the besieged with the besieger?

With the same exactness and precision, these learned criticks add, that the child which was eaten by these two women ought to have been food enough for them for four days at least. They know surely what every one does not, the age and size of this child; and they have calculated exactly, how much two women can eat, who are almost starved to death. These indeed are noble discoveries.

Truly, fir, when we hear these able criticks thus reasoning, is it hard treatment to say, that they are absent in mind?

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FIFTEENTH

FIFTEENTH EXTRACT.

Of some sciences and arts. Of languages. Latin and Greek.

improbable. There extinct he any thins

ly or over their wall, to determine diffus

When we read, fir, in one of your late compositions, that notwithstanding your infirmities, you are actually taken up with twenty sciences, altho' we could not help admiring your unremitting ardour for exalted knowledge, yet our admiration was mixed with pain.

We could not help pitying you, and befides pitying the sciences, the age you live in, and posterity. We pitied you, because you take too little care of your precious life and health, objects of great moment to all lovers of literature and philosophy. We pitied the sciences, because twenty sciences cultivated at one time by one man, altho' of a deep and bright genius, must be all lightly run over, and none of them fearched to the bottom. And lastly we pitied posterity, because the mistakes of great men are of a spreading nature; they are equally hurtful to their cotemporaries and to future ages; and we think it very difficult for you not to fall into many fuch, when you treat of fo many fubjects. Already you have committed many mistakes. We shall endeavour now, fir, to point

point out some of them to you; but we do not promise to follow you every where thro' that immense carreer which you tread with such undaunted steps.

veniusev to attempt to point our folia and taken

of Languages.

You are a perfect master, sir, of all the learned languages and of the modern too. Those of the English, Italians, Romans, Greeks, Hebrews, Egyptians, Syrians, Caldeans, Arabians; from east to west, from antiquity to modern times, you know all their different tongues. You compare these different languages; you determine their advantages and disadvantages; you quote their expressions, and point out the sense of them; in short, you possess a most extensive and unerring knowledge, with respect to all these objects as well as many others.

As for our knowledge, it is quite superficial and contracted; we make this humble confession. We learned only a little Latin at (1) the university of Zamosc, and a few Greek words in that of Leyden; and the acquaint-Vol. II.

⁽¹⁾ University of Zamosc. This is an university in Poland, frequented by the Jews. Quære, Are they admitted at Leyden? Christ.

ance we have with the language of our fathers, is but just fufficient to enable us to understand moderately our facred writings. And yet with this poor flock of learning, we venture to attempt to point out fome miftakes of this kind in your writings, which ought to be corrected! This is a bold and rash undertaking; we are sensible of it; but the defire of being useful to you, incites us to it. We hope that the mediocrity of our talents will be compensated by the ardour of our zeal. Greeks, Hebrews, Frystians, deanes Arabians, from east 1

Of the Latin tongue. Some of the learned critick's Latin.

You have, fir, a translation of our facred writings in the Latin tongue, which fome of the learned call barbarous, and (1) others vindicate it. In imitation probably of this old translation, you fpeak to the sea in Latin, and you fay to it,

or slomed shir a **Text.** we have the contraction is an interest of the contraction of the

" Hue usque venies & non ibis amplius."

Comment.

(1) Others vindicate. See what Filefac, the famous Syndic of the university of Paris has said of it. See also what a learned Benedictine has faid in a work called, An Explanation of some difficult passages of Scripture, Idem.

Comment.

Non ibis amplius. If you pretend that this Latin is out of the vulgate, you wrong it. Altho' the vulgate is barbarous, as you fay, yet it never pushed barbarism to that pitch. We have read it over carefully and found no fuch thing in it. Pray then, fir, is this your Latin? It is rather flat. Ah, fir, non ibis amplius! This is the fort of Latin we hear, when we are taking post-horses in Poland, and of shucker for working with small

eldocobragan (na) \$.e3 it win E forest ows

of abasiliation soil, and a supposite fire A passage of the vulgate ill translated.

After all, what matters it whether a man fpeaks elegant Latin or not? The point is to understand it. We doubt not, fir, but you have a perfect knowledge of the authors of the Augustin age; but indeed you fometimes make mistakes, when you translate Latin writers of later date. For instance, your vulgate version addresses these words to God, " producens fœnum jumentis & herbam fer-" vituti hominum." Which you thus render, talentes. You call us of the following infacin-

enorth has einstrong Texts for more bout arrest

"Thou producest hay for cattle, and grass for man." (Philos. of History.) was unverflood Mobrew, thus ton lates it. Germmans t. than Communication of January Jers N. Dominum. Edit.

Comment.

We think, fir, that this is not the exact fense of the Latin. This verse does not speak of the food of men, but of that of Beasts intended for the service of men; for heasts God gives hay and grass. In this passage, fir, grass and hay are (1) synonimous words. Observe this. And men do not eat hay.

If you found the Latin of the vulgate obfcure, why had you not recourse to the Hebrew text? Truly this is an unpardonable negligence in a man that understands Hebrew, and you often fall into it!

After all, vehat makers it whether a man

A mistake of greater consequence.

The two mistakes which we have now pointed out are but of small consequence; the following one is important.

gate vertion addresses these words to God.

You are speaking of your first masters, those who first brought to light your great talents. You tell us of the following inscription. Quod eorum instinctu piacularis adolescens facinus

⁽¹⁾ Synonimous words. For this reason faint Jerom, who understood Hebrew, thus translates it. Germinans berbam jumentis & fænum servituti bominum. Edit.

COMMENTARY.

facinus instituerat; and thus you render these words, " they were driven away."

in hamound of some I Text airs in him to so to a

the inteription. But if it is not thesepid you "Because they prevailed on a young man " to commit this parricide by way of pe-" nance." (Evangile du jour.) of your voilly what will the insouncer.

named and to want Comment. elapholisms avail-

We cannot find any thing in this Latin fentence that speaks of penance. Perhaps you think that piacularis adolescens signified a young penitent; no, fir, it signifies an accurfed young man, an execrable young villain; therefore this expression, by way of penance, is either a wilful mistake, or at least a grofs blunder. of abstracting an administration with noted very nonourable proceedings first fame

You add a reflection, the justness and bent of which, christians are better judges of than we can be. predentarions.

Text.

Upon the viscle "This word, (that of penance,) becomes " by this act, one of the most extraordinary " monuments for illustrating the history of

" the human mind." on more a bush blood

ere little millakes

Comment.

Comment.

facing inflituerat; and thus you render thefe ".veva Comment. ew yell " abrow

Yes, truly, if this word was to be found in the inscription. But if it is not there, if you have added it out of your own head, if this mistake is purposely made to cast an odium on the rites of your church, and the guides of your youth, what will this monument ferve to illustrate in the history of the human mind?

We cannot find any thing in this Latin Rouffeau generoufly refused to write against these fathers, because they were in trouble; and you, their disciple, seize this unfortunate opportunity of once more opening and poifoning those fores which time had closed up. With this view you falfify, or at least unfaithfully translate a publick inscription! This is not a very honourable proceeding, fir; fome gratitude is owing to our first masters; but above all things, there should be no mifrepresentations. we can be:

Upon the whole, these three little mistakes with regard to the Latin tongue, are of no great confequence to the Jews. Confider however, fir, whether it is proper that they should stand in your new edition.

(i) a mention of courts of the star realism letter importance transcens, the translates is

this word (1) Baddistate have been told

Of the Greek tongue. Of some mistakes in this language which must certainly be owing to the printer. somewing overflywov ! Words north

You display your erudition chiefly, fir, when the Greek language is in question; this language has for you charms inexpressible, you never speak of it but with raptures; you every where extol its clearness, copiousness and harmony. After all this, how can we suppose, with certain rath christians, that you do not understand Greek, or that you have at most but a smattering of it? Far be it from us to form such bold conjectures! We think it incumbent on us, to look upon all these small mistakes into which you have fallen, merely as typographical errors, or at most as absences of mind, very excusable in a great man who is dipt in twenty sciences. You have faid, for instance, or comes from the Greek eides a figure, Eide-

be, the representation of a figure. The

"They gave these magistrates the name " of Bafiloi, which answers to that of prince." (Philosophy of History.) (1) Bolibi. See the Supplement to the Philotophy of Milotophy of Milotophy a west fell of an entention evolution which that the Voltaire fays he.tnemmod ed politely and homeoned.

You have been teized, fir, with respect to sidt in or put for an er. Aut.

the Alas, what politeness and terring! Ast,

this word (1) Bafiloi; you have been told that it should be written Bafileis and not Bafiloi, for Bafiloi is not Greek. As if Mr. de Voltaire could be ignorant of what children know! You have given a very good answer, that this is (2) a typographical error.

People have replied, that it is hard to conceive how, by a typographical error, the fame word should be repeated five or fix times in your works, and in every edition of them, still in the fame way, that is always wrong, and never right. But all this is mere chicanery! Altho' it is hard to conceive this, yet there is no physical impossibility in it. As for our parts, fir, we are not to hard to fatisfy; the defence feems to us rexceedingly plaufible. Therefore altho you have faid,

most as lableaces of txsTk every excufable in

a great man who is dipt in twenty frictions " Symbole comes from Symbolein, Idol " comes from the Greek eidos a figure, Eido-" los, the representation of a figure. The " Greeks had their Demonoi . . . The Demonos " of the Greeks, &c." (Philosoph. Dict.) "souting to the of erawline double wie Comment:

(cynof):HAe syde (1) Bafiloi, See the Supplement to the Philosophy of History, a work full of uncommon erudition, which Mr. de Voltaire says he has confuted politely and learnedly. Alas, what politeness and learning! Aut.

(2) A typographical error. Indeed as Mr. de Voltaire very justly observes, the matter is only a sigma forgotten,

and an oi put for an ei. Aut.

berebuild over no Comment. as Alees of the second pour si

We do not think, fir, that we have any right to find fault with you about this; it would ill become us truly to tell you that you should have wrote Eidolon and not Eidolos, for Eidolos is not Greek. That the Greeks have no Demonoi but Demones; that Demonos for Demonoi is a folecism; that Symbolein for Symballein is a barbarism. You know all these things better than we do, and it is about a thousand to one that you wrote the words correctly.

Certainly, however, it is unfortunate that these little mistakes should be found in every edition of your works, even in that which is executing under your own eyes. But these printers are such idle rogues, such things will not surprize any one that knows them! Probably these very people made you say,

Greek language, white we were with here and lone and lone with seed There were known as a famous and lone with the contract of the contract of

"Gertainly the word Knath, which figniif fies the Phenicians, is not so harmonious
as that of Hellenos or Graios." (Philosophy of History.)

Comment.

You have been told that the word Graios is

is not Greek, and that you have blundered in naming that nation whose character you so highly extol.

You have been told that you ought to have wrote Hellen and not Hellenos; that Hellenos is not a nominative case nor Graios, &c. You certainly knew this well, but your printers are not fo learned; you probably had wrote Hellen and Graicos, and they wrote Hellenos or Graios. O the wretched printer! the poor compositor! the ignorant corrector of the press! What a man must fuffer who deals with fuch people!

... Cerainly however, it's automacae that the different lakes to the found in every

Of some other slight faults, which might not perbaps be the printer's.

And yet it is hard, fir, to charge on your printers all those little mistakes relative to the Greek language, which we meet with here and there in your works. There are some which cannot juffly be charged on them; for instance you fay, and and the son "

Lotol Sty " roles Text. gall 1 . rolly go to

" A Raven, (if we believe Suetonius) cried " out in the capitol, when they were going " to affaffinate Domitian, εται παντα καλως. "This is well done, all is well."

Comment.

navis nasa a wal ! Comment, and so le

Εται παντα καλως, fir, does not fignify all is well, but all will be well, all will fucceed. The Romans were not of your opinion, that future events cannot be foretold; they thought that even Ravens fometimes foretold them; pradixit ab ilice cornix.

Probably this change of the future for the present tense, proceeds rather from your antipathy for predictions, than from your correctors of the press. But, fir, a translator is bound to confult rather his text than his taste. Estai is the future not the present tense. Here follows something yet stronger, you fay,

Text.

" John Castriot was the son of a despot, " that is of a vaffal prince; for this is the " meaning of the word despot; and it is " very extraordinary that the name of def-" potick has been particularly given to great " fovereigns who acquired absolute power." (Philosophy of History.

Comment.

Here, fir, criticks have triumphed. You know it, and indeed this affertion that defpot fignifies a vaffal-prince, this amazement that the the name of despotick should have been given particularly to great sovereigns who acquired absolute power, &c. all this can scarcely be a typographical error. But we think that the more palpable the blunder, the more excusable it is; the poorest scholar knows that despot signifies not a vassal prince but a master, an absolute master who commands his slaves. We perceive then immediately that you must have wrote this in an absent hour; and who is not sometimes absent? We can easily perceive that you are pretty often so.

From these small mistakes in the Greek tongue, shall we infer with some christians, that you are a bad Grecian? This inference would be uncivil; God forbid that we should push detestation so far! We shall only draw two conclusions from this, the first is, that when you translate Greek you should do it with more attention; the second is, that when Greek is printing, you should have a more watchful eye over your printers.

It is true these precautions are not necesfary to persuade your admirers, that you are a master of Greek; these kind people will believe you on your word, and will take, as long as you please, some unintelligible mangled words for pure Greek, which they do not understand. But surely you will not rest satisfied merely with the applause and approbation of such readers. Your own nation and foreigners have some learned men among them, whose suffrages are worth looking after. You have reason to fear, lest these great encomiums of the Greek language may appear to them to be an empty parade of learning; your quotations, quackery; and these frequent mistakes, proofs too convincing of your small share of knowledge in this branch of literature.

As for us, fir, we have pointed out these mistakes, only that you might correct them in your new edition, if you think proper; even were they to stand, we should look upon them merely as spots, light spots, which can cause neither astonishment nor offence. Non ego paucis offendar maculis, quas aut incuria sudit, aut humana parum cavit natura. Nature is so weak and a man has so much business in this world!

SIXTEENTH EXTRACT.

Of certain sciences and arts; the sequel. Of the Hebrew language.

He who attempts to criticise any work, should previously understand the language in which it is written.

abrow

You

You are sensible of this, sir; and for this reason you have consecrated, they say, a great portion of your time and labour to the study of the Hebrew tongue. Success has crowned your labours, we are convinced of it, as becomes us.

But we fear left others may entertain fome doubts on this head, if you do not change in your new edition certain arguments which are in the preceding ones. We shall quote some of them.

bednice . \$. tow . in .es so

Poverty and difficulty of the Hebrew tongue. Proofs which the learned critick gives of this. Observations on these proofs.

One of the first advantages you have reaped from your application to the Hebrew language is, your finding out that it is poor and almost unintelligible. This you endeavour to prove.

Text.

"This language, like all barbarous idioms, was poor; the same word ferved for se"veral ideas."

Comment.

We do not pretend to fay that the fame words

words ferving for several ideas, is a proof of the copiousness of a language, but is it on the contrary a proof of its poverty and barbarism?

This defect, fir, is not peculiar to barbarous idioms; it may be found in the most copious and polite languages; in that of Greece and Rome, and in yours too; languages which cannot be called barbarous.

Probably then your first argument, on the poverty and barbarism of the Hebrew tongue, is no demonstration. You add,

Text.

"The Jews, deprived of the arts, could not express what they were ignorant of." (Toleration.)

Comment.

The Jews spoke the same language as the Phenicians; and these latter were acquainted with the arts, for they taught them to the Greeks and to others. Could one justly say that the people of Lucca, who speak Italian, have a poor language, and that the Florentines, who also speak Italian, have a rich and copious language?

But

But you will perhaps fay, that our affertion is not well grounded, that the Jews spoke the language of the Phenicians. But, sir, we affert this after some of the illustrious learned, even after yourself; for according to you,

· Text.

"The Jews for a long time spoke no other language in Canaan than that of the Phenicians."

old do Avorren Comment. v ged vldsdor 9

Nothing is more certain. The Jews spoke the Phenician language for a long time; and it would be hard to point out a period in which they did not speak it, from the time of Jacob to the Babylonian captivity. Perhaps you will say that the Phenician language was poor, but according to you again,

Text.

"The most perfect languages must neces-"farily be the languages of those nations who "have most cultivated the arts and sciences." (Premiers Melanges.)

Comment.

This is very true; now the Phenicians cultivated add, and how reversely that and friends. Therefore you

bowy language mad. txaTound in the le books

"The language of the Phenicians was the language of an industrious, commercial, rich nation, spread over the whole earth." (Ibidem.)

Orecies and Lacins. temment come down to

Therefore, fir, their language must have been, according to your principles, one of the most perfect and rich languages; and you affert that the language of the Hebrews, who used the same, was one of the poorest languages. Truly, fir, it is very difficult to reconcile these affertions. But,

of the word thekestall? You will answer perhaps that this wetwalk not in the Bible:

"The words geometry, astronomy, were "always absolutely unknown among the "Jews." (Philos. Dict.)

"How could thethemmon s have fea-terms.

1st, The Babylonians were aftronomers, the Egyptians geometricians, and the Phenicians both. Be so kind, sir, as to tell us what were the names of astronomy or geometry at Babylon or in Egypt. Inform us at least, how the Phenicians called these sciences.

Vol. II.

adly, Do you not perceive, that your argument implies, that every word of the Hebrew language must be found in those books which the ancient Hebrews have left us? Truly a very reasonable supposition!

What! fir, it is probable, or rather certain that all terms, and all the sciences of the Greeks and Latins have not come down to us, altho' we have such a number of books of both; and you expect that all the words of the Hebrew language, all the sciences of the Hebrews, should be found in a single volume, which has escaped the fate of so many others, a mere pocket-volume!

3dly, Do you know, fir, the fignification of the word thekounah? You will answer perhaps that this word is not in the Bible; we know it; but altho' the derivative is not to be found there, yet the root is.

Text 1 lolid9)

"How could the Hebrews have fea-terms, they, who before Solomon, had not a boat?" (Premiers Melanges.) maintained and and animal animal

cians both. Be lo kinemico as to tell us what

How can the people of Geneva, who are not masters of an advice boat, properly fitted

out, have, in their language, terms of feawar? Because the people of Geneva speak French, and the French have a fleet properly equipped, and all the terms of sea-war in their language.

Thus the Hebrews may have had fea-terms, without having a boat, because they spoke the language of the Phenicians, who had fleets.

of thought suffrield and variety of smakes.

However, fir, when you affirm, that before Solomon the Hebrews had not a boat, you forget Deborah's fong, which represents Afer at ease in his havens, and Dan busied with his ships.

Text.

" How could they have any philosophical terms, they who were plunged in such pro-

" found ignorance, until they began to learn

" fomething in their captivity?" (Ibidem.)

Level Comment.

How could they have any philosophical terms? The same way that the Phenicians got them.

They who were plunged in such profound ignorance, &c. Here, fir, you exaggerate very Z 2 much

doura

much. Not to mention the author of the Pentateuch; Jeremiah, Isaiah, and other prophets, Solomon who wrote fo much, David the author of fo many tender and fublime pieces of poetry, &c. lived before the captivity, and they were not men plunged in the most profound ignorance. It could be proved, that many who are very justly esteemed in our days as writers of merit, fall short of those ancient Hebrews, not only in sublimity of thought, justness, and variety of images, but even in the energy, fire, and copiousness of expression and awards H and name & seed you for the boral's long, which reprefects

Plunged in such profound ignorance. This is a passionate expression, fir; anger is overcoming you. Let us shift the subject.

but allow coulds her bave and philosophical

Of the obscurity of the Hebrew language. Whether it is such, that our sacred writings are absolutely unintelligible?

You pass from this to the difficulty, or rather impossibility of understanding our lan-How could they have any pulologang terms I'm tume vites hat the Phenicians

" This language labours under difficulties " infurmountable; it is a mixture of Phenician "Story Here, he your exercise nician " nician and Syrian, &c. and this ancient " mixture is at this day much adulterated.

"The Hebrews never had but two moods "for the yerbs, the present and the future,

" the other moods are guess-work. Each adverb has twenty different significations.

"The same word is taken in contrary senses."
(Toleration.) and mead and suggest weeded and

out any adulterattnemmods could fearcely be

affirmed of the Greek or Latin.

Let us proceed to examine. This language has difficulties insurmountable. But what ancient language has not its difficulties? Is there an ancient writer, even a Latin one, who has not some difficulties insurmountable? And yet the greatest part of these writings is understood. The same may be said of our writings; altho' obscure in many places, yet they are in general clear enough to convey certain knowledge, with regard to every thing that ought to be known respecting doctrine and morals.

It is a mixture of Phenician and Syrian. The Hebrew was less a mixture of Phenician and Syrian, even than the language of the Phenicians; it was also fundamentally the language of the Syrians, Caldeans, Arabians, &c. All these idioms were really so many dialects of a general language, which was common to all these nations, which may be called

called the oriental language. Thus (1) the truly learned speak; and if you had observed this, you would not have fallen into so many little mistakes and weak arguments.

And this ancient mixture is at this day much adulterated. We do not pretend to fay that the Hebrew tongue has been preserved without any adulteration; this could scarcely be affirmed of the Greek or Latin.

Every adverb has twenty different fignifications. Open the first Greek Lexicon, sir, and you will find that most of the Greek prepositions have twenty different significations, and that the same word is very often taken in contrary senses.

Proceed to examine and

The Hebrew has but two moods, the present and the future. The famous Grammarian Dumarsais would have said two tenses. The present and the future are tenses, not moods. We must forgive this little grammatical slip in a great man who is taken up with twenty sciences.

It is true the Hebrew has but two tenfes, and the others are guess-work, but it is generally very easy to guess at them.

and Syrian, even then the language of the

dodUst of a general language,

⁽¹⁾ The truly learned. See among others the works of the learned Michaelis; Louth, de facra poesi Hebræorum, &c.

Upon the whole, we readily grant that our language would have been more clear, if it had had all the tenses of the Greek and French language; and we do not deny that the want of these is the cause of some obscurity in our facred writings.

the one which you do get mention one salt

For what reasons chiefly the Hebrew language appears poor and obscure.

But what principally contributes to make this language appear poor and obscure is, that we have at present but one book, of no considerable bulk, in it. What language would not appear in the same light, if we had as sew remains of it? How would even the Greek tongue appear, if out of all the Greek books, none had come down to us but Herodotus, Eschilus and Pindar?

in his Plaims, or Moles in

This, sir, is the true reason of the difficulty and actual poverty of the Hebrew. Hence a multitude of words relative to the arts and sciences are absolutely unknown to us at present, altho' they formerly made up part of this language. For instance, how many words, of which we have not any idea now, would have been found in the works of Solomon, on botany and natural history, if these works had been preserved! Hence too tage in Hebrew as in other languages, of comparing a number of texts with one another, in order to clear up the meaning of words. Therefore, in speaking of the poverty of the Hebrew tongue, you ought to have insisted principally on this reason; and this is precisely the one which you do not mention.

Altho' this disadvantage is the necessary cause of obscurity in various passages of our facred writings, yet it prevents us not from understanding very clearly the largest and most useful part of them. And what remains of our writers, is sufficient to convince an impartial man of letters, that their language, fo far from being poor and dry, as you fay, was on the contrary copious and rich. Let a man read Jeremiah and Isaiah, and tell us whether they are deficient in purity, elegance, fublimity, and pomp of expression. Does David want these in his Psalms, or Moses in his Canticles? Does the Author of the Book of Job, our Homer, the most antient and perfect of our poets, want them? You are a poor Hebrean indeed, fir, if in their divine writings you have found the Hebrew language dry and poor!

We shall now, with your leave, proceed from your general reflections on our language, to some particulars.

they became flaves in Calded. We beg leave to a so, in, abstable is far from a just infe-

Of the word Israel. Whether Jacob could not get the name of Israel, and the Hebrews that of Israelites, 'till after or during the Babylonish captivity. The critick's forgetfulness and contradictions.

to viima old to saw Text. to oliwood toool

Macbon, the brother of Abraham, and a Cal-

"Philo fays that Ifrael is a Caldean word, "that it is a name which the Caldeans gave to just men confecrated to God; that Ifrael fignifies feeing God. This therefore is sufficient proof, that the Jews did not call Jacob Ifrael and themselves Ifraelites, until they had got some knowledge of the Caldean tongue; now they could not get any knowledge of it until they became flaves in Caldea. Is it probable that in the deserts of Arabia Petræa they had already learned the Caldean tongue?" (Philosophy of History.)

eccording to man, term of painted and

salogi norba

We grant, fir, that Philo fays Ifrael is a Caldean word, and that the Jews did not learn the Caldean language in the deferts of Arabia.

From this you infer, that they could not get any knowledge of this language, until they

have the nic and knowleds

they became flaves in Caldea. We beg leave to fay, fir, that this is far from a just inference.

In the first place your memory is faulty. You do not recollect that Abraham was a Caldean, that his wife Sarah, his nephew Lot and all their family were of Caldea; that Rebecca the wife of Isaac, was of the family of Nachor, the brother of Abraham, and a Caldean too; that Jacob threw himself into the arms of this Caldean family, to avoid the refentment of his brother; that he married two wives there and had many children; and that a little time after he had quitted this family, he received the name of Ifrael from the angel. This patriarch who descended from the Caldeans, who had lived fo long in a Caldean family, and his children who were born there, might have had fome knowledge of the Caldean language.

We may add, as we observed above, that according to many of the learned, the languages which were then spoke in Caldea, Syria, and Palestine, &c. were only so many dialects of one language, and that according to yourself, the Hebrew was a jargon of mixed Caldean; therefore the Hebrews might have the use and knowledge of a Caldean word, without becoming slaves to the Caldeans.

Let us add lastly, that Philo the Hellenistick Jew, who was probably much better acquainted with Greek than with Caldean, is mistaken with regard to the origin and signification of (1) the word Israel; this name, which was given to Jacob after his wrestle with the angel, is very pure Hebrew, compounded of two very pure Hebrew roots, which signify to prevail, to wrestle with advantage (2) against God, as is explained in Genesis.

To the authority of Philo, you add that of Josephus. You fay,

his Antiquities, and we found in them precifely the contrary txsT hat you aforthe to

"Ifrael fignifies feeing God, as Philo in"forms us in his Treatife of Rewards and
"Punishments, and as the historian Josephus
"fays in his answer to Appion." (Homlie fur l'Atheisme, Dictionaire Philos.)

. soonly must to souls Comment,

(1) The word Ifrael. This word might absolutely fignify in the Caldean and Hebrew language, feeing God; but another fignification not less conformable to the Hebrew roots, caused this name to be given to Jacob. See Genesis, ch. 32. v. 28. Edit.

(2) Against God. That is, against the angel of God, the angels are sometimes called God's Elohim in Scripture. The angel says to Jacob according to the Hebrew Text, thou hast sought against the Elohim, (against the Gods, that is the angels,) and against men, and thou hast remained conqueror. Aut.

Mointalist (off) o Comment. villak bboard ta. Le

long twent was probled witness hotten

When we read over this passage, and three or four more, in which you repeat nearly the same things, we asked ourselves, did Josephus say this, or did Mr. de Voltaire make a salse quotation?

In the midst of doubt we read over several times his answer to Appion, without finding any thing in it, similar to what you make him say.

Tired of fruitless searches we read over his Antiquities, and we found in them precisely the contrary of what you ascribe to him. It is said there (1) expressly that after the wrestle, the angel ordered Jacob to assume the name of Israel, which signifies in Hebrew, wrestling against the angel of God and resisting him. Such credit, sir, must be given to your quotations, even when repeated in three or four places.

Come again and tell us, that Israel is a Caldean name, that Josephus affirms it, and in your ironical style, that probably the Israelites did not learn the Caldean language in the deserts of Arabia Petræa. This irony we think, sir, is no proof of the goodness of your

Gods, that is the angeles) and againft men, and thou half

⁽¹⁾ Expressly. See his Antiquities, fib. 1. ch. 20. Aut.

your memory, or of the extent of your knowledge in the Hebrew and Caldaick tongues.

In the first place, 27 % trait us a said visit

Of the names of God in use among st the Jews. Mistakes and contradictions of the illustrious writer on this subject. Of the word El.

Nor do you give better proofs of your knowledge by the manner in which you speak of the names of God, used by our fathers. You say,

his family quitted axe native country by

"These puppies of Jews are of so late a "date, that they had not a word in their "language even to signify God." (Philos. Dict. Raison par alphabet, Dialogues.)

Comment. blad to see A Comment.

These puppies. This is not a decent expression, sir, and you use it often. When you bestow it on worthy members of literature it gives offence; but when you apply it to a whole nation, it only excites laughter.

Are of so late a date. The Jews never pretended that they were the most ancient people

people in the world, fuch a pretention would contradict all their annals.

They had not a word in their language, &c. In the first place, sir, permit us to ask you what was the first Jewish language? For in short these puppies did not arise out of the earth; they were born among some nations more ancient than themselves; consequently they had a language. Pray, sir, what was this ancient language, in which they had not a name for God?

Even to fignify God. This is new if not whimfical. What! fir, when Abraham and his family quitted their native country by God's command, when they removed into a strange land for the sake of freely worshipping the true God, Abraham and his family had not a word in their language to signify God! Can you be serious when you say this?

beak of the names of God, used by our ra-

Abraham a Caldean, and his family Caldeans also, probably spoke Caldean. Now the Caldeans at least must have had a word in their language to signify God, witness, according to you, Israel, seeing God, Babel, city of God, El, the name of God. For,

Text.

[&]quot;This name (El) was originally Caldean." Comment.

Comment.

And can we conceive that the father of the faithful, who was a Caldean, did not know the name of God in Caldean? Do you perceive, fir, how fenfible, judicious and conclusive all this is? Here follows fomething not less fo; who keyled one mind of a

1 200 350 on SText: Town only Englished

" This word El, fignified God among the " first Phenicians. (Philos. of Hist. article

never to pronouse this word interestable

" Phenicians.) The lews took from the Phe-

" nicians all the names which they gave to

"God" (Ibidem.) Ido orow evel of I

" name of Jeberah or Habs from the Syrians." Comment. sagla asq notis A)

Therefore Abraham, a Caldean, with his Caldean family, came into Phenicia, to borrow a Caldean word. These fine things are coolly related to us in the Melanges de Philosophie, in the Raison par Alphabet, which might better be called (i) Abfurdity par Alphabet!

.6 ? They borrowed this world from the Phe-"inicians, (the word a Relevant yet (Hallot)

⁽¹⁾ Absurdity par Alphabet. This jest is not to our tafte; we think that our authors indulged themselves in it, only because it was copied from some of Mr. de Voltaire's wit. Edit.

Card of the Silver of

Sequel of the same subject. Of the word Jaho, or Jebovab.

The Jews never pronounced the word Jebovab but with the profoundest respect; it is to them the holy and dreadful name. Christians who worship the same God, ought never to pronouce this word irreverently. Let us fee, fir, whether you speak of it with first Phonicians, (Philos. of first at thurt Pheniciana) The hast cook from the Phe-

" nicians, all the names which they gave to " The Jews were obliged to borrow the " name of Jebovab or Jaho from the Syrians." (Raifon par Alphabet, Dialogues.)

ent drive asobie Commentier A erolared I.

Caldean family, came into Phenicias to both This, fir, ought to be proved; until then we may doubt of it, and we may the more justly do fo, because you say in another place,

Text.

"They borrowed this word from the Phe-" nicians, (the word "febovab.") (Philof. Dictionary.)

taired aimin Line

Yell cannot besuft the numbers for your fav Comment.

excited on the Androger contract of this

This affertion fomewhat contradicts the former, and you give no better proof of it, this is depending much on the kindness or credulity of your readers. We do not pretend howeversiondeny that

You should have informed them at least. from which of these two nations, the lews first borrowed this word; and why, after borrowing it from one, they borrowed it after from the other. We doubt not but you could fay many very curious things on this fubject. But this is not all, you add, how and more what a labould obey his voice and de

How I bus charake pexturnal I how bold theed the others, will as floogeleast late books

" They borrowed this word from the " Egyptians, as the truly learned believe." understand the Greek of

"The word Jahranemon common in Level. " that Diodorus Siculus ufes it."

(Philot. of

They therefore borrowed it from the Syrians, Egyptians and Phenicians; three loans instead of one. Indeed, fir, you fay too much to be believed. With all these reasons you would almost persuade us, that this word is of Hebrew extraction, nommon need even of Diodorus, without having boon to in

They borrowed this word from the Egyptians, as the truly learned believe. The truly learned, fir! Vol. II. You Aa

You cannot be of the number, for you say that the Jews borrowed this word (1) from the Phenicians only. And yet you are of this number, for you say also that they borrowed it from the Egyptians. This shews the advantage of contradicting one's self-

We do not pretend however to deny that the word Jehovah was known by the Egyptians; they certainly knew it after the prodigies which they saw performed in the name of Jehovah. But did they know it before? You give no proofs of this, and we think that a contrary conclusion may be drawn from the words of Pharaoh, "Who is Jehowah that I should obey his voice and let "Israel go? I know not Jehovah and I will "not let Israel go."

Eyptians, as the traffy learned believe."

"The word Jaho was to common in Egypt, "that Diodorus Siculus uses it." (Philof. of History) to a second word of the world word of the world word.

rians, Egyptians a trammaDians; three loans

Diodorus Siculus may have used it, althorit was not common in the East, and it may have been common in the East in the time of Diodorus, without having been so in the

⁽¹⁾ From the Phenicians only. See Philosophical Dictionary: Aut.

time of the ancient Hebrews. There is an interval of more than one thousand five hundred years between Moses and Diodorus Siculus; it is proper not to lose fight of these periods.

In short, sir, if the word Jaho was common in the east from the earliest times, as were those, according to yourself, (i) El, Eloba, Elobim, Adonai, Baal, Bel, this is an additional proof of what we have already advanced, that in these early ages especially, the languages of the East had a close resemblance, and that they were no more than dialects of the same language; so that a great many words were common to them all, and he that understood one language easily understood the others; just as he who understands Spanish, can easily understand Italian, and he that understood the Greek of Athens, might easily understand the Greek of Ionia.

eshight to dilyon bear \$ 7 res unto delit) and lest

becomes a learned Holes and link as you are

Of the names of Angels.

You strive hard, sir, to persuade your readers,

(1) The words El. Mr. de Voltaire observes that the word El has a close relation to the Arabian word Alla, the observation is just, and this is another proof of the original resemblance of all these ancient dialects of the oriental language. Aut.

readers, that the Hebrews knew nothing of Angels 'till after the Babylonish captivity. Various reflexions scattered in your Raison par Alphabet and your Philosophie de l'Histoire tend to establish this point. You say,

In thort, fir, if there ord Jaho was com-

"In the laws of the Jews, that is in Le"viticus and Deuteronomy, there is not the
"least mention made of Angels; but in the
"Histories of the Jews there is much talk of
"them." (Philos. Dict. article Angels.)

Vanua tooly a Comment, bastrand bank bit

words were continued to them all, and he

Altho' no mention is made of Angels in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, yet they are spoken of in Exodus, a book which contains a great part of our laws, as Leviticus and Deuteronomy contain part of our history; it becomes a learned Hebrean, such as you are, to be a little better acquainted with our books and their contents. You add, at least,

reeve the from of A Arish will no Ye

"It is well known that the Jewish clans borrowed the names which the Caldeans gave to Angels, when the Jewish nation was captive in Babylon." (Ibidem.)

out to all some afficient should the do somether Comment.

until the Reviewed castinity! We lived it Comment. of average

It is well known. This is the affertion, now let us fee the proof. &c. Therefore the forwards are not Hebrew, therefore the Hebrewitten not know them

" These words Raphael, Gabriel, &c. are " Caldean. The Jews did not know them

" until the captivity; for before the history

" of Tobias we cannot find the name of any " Angel, either in the Pentateuch or in any

" Hebrew book." (Philof. of Hift. art. Angels.)

" Sathan is found in Job, but who is to " little versed in antiquity as not to know " that the word Sathan is Caldean?" (Ibidem.)

would not nextigally followed betwie notiner Comment. 3

legions now day saids the Books of These words Raphael, &c. are Caldean. We might stop you here, fir, and maintain that these words are as much Hebrew as Caldean. and that as they are derived from the same language, which is the common parent of the Hebrew and Caldean dialects, they belong no more to one of these dialects than to the other.

Four bride mentaried. Br. 30 Amello19 force But even suppose these words were rather Caldean than Hebrew, would it follow from thence that the Jews could not know them lithus Treatise de favor book thebrerons, Antiuntil the Babylonish captivity? We have already shewn the contrary.

Before the history of Tobias, we cannot find the name of any angel, either in the Pentateuch, &c. Therefore these words are not Hebrew, therefore the Hebrews did not know them until the captivity. You always suppose, fir, that all the words of the Hebrew tongue must be found in the books prior to the captivity, and that the Hebrews knew no more but what is found in them.

The same may be said of the word Sathan; it is as much an Hebrew as a Caldean word, at least if you will believe a man (1) somewhat versed in antiquity; and althor this word were Caldaick, your conclusion would not necessarily follow, that the author of the Book of Job was an Arabian. But let us now lay aside the Book of Job; we may perhaps hereafter have occasion to say something to you concerning it.

as they are, sereved from the fund

and the remain parent of the

Of some other Hebrew and Phenician words, &c.

You have ventured, sir, to translate some Hebrew

⁽¹⁾ Somewhat versed in antiquity. The learned Mr. Michaelis. See his Notes on the celebrated Bishop Louth's Treatise de sacra Poess Hebraorum. Aut.

Hebrew and Phenician words; and you have not always done it with fuch exactness as might be expected from a man of your knowledge in the oriental languages.

a swarf provide a first order has a state of the contract of ted to as I dend to a Text out beat your way Million . . . But why floudd we be repetition

" Kiriath Sepher fignifies the country of " Archives, Muth or Moth, matter; Colpi " Fabo, the spirit of God, the wind of God, " or rather the mouth of God, &c." (Philofephy of History. with nood word soon sayed denvelors have the only for their object.

Comment.

Sir, when a man attempts to make as ge-Kiriath Sepher does not fignify the country of Archives, but the city of Books. Out of a city you form a country. This is allowing too great measure. Muth or Moth, fir, does not fignify matter but death; it is Mot that fignifies matter. Such a difference do the letters t or th make in words.

Colpi Jaho, the spirit, the wind, or rather the mouth of God. You hesitate, sir, you are doubtful of the fignification, and in the midst of your confusion you determine ill. Col, is the voice, Pi, the mouth, Jaho, God, Colpi Jabo, the word of the mouth of God. See of hospy basted duiblines Sea Detence of

Old Fellapsent, Supplement to the Philadelpy

Some

townical Dictionary, & c.

(1) Some learned christians have already pointed out these little mistakes, they have concluded, one of them, that you should not decide with such authority with respect to the oriental languages; another, that you have a very superficial knowledge of them; another still . . . But why should we be repeating to you criticisms which have greatly incensed you? Let us be satisfied with praying you to correct these small inadvertencies, from which we are sorry to see that such disagreeable consequences have been drawn. Our poor endeavours have this only for their object.

Sir, when a man attempts to make a general revolution in the minds of men, he should have, if not the gift of tongues, yet a decent knowledge of them.

SEVENTEENTH EXTRACT.

Sequel of sciences and arts. Of logick. Of certain arguments of Mr. de Voltaire.

It is not fufficient to write in an eafy, pleafing manner, there must be found reasoning besides. Without this the most brilliant style will

(1) Some learned christians. See Defence of the Books of the Old Testament, Supplement to the Philosophy of History, Refutation of certain Articles in the Philosophical Dictionary, &c.

COMMENTARY.

will only dazzle the writer, and deceive the reader.

We are far from thinking, fir, that you have neglected this part so necessary to a good writer. On the contrary, we are fully perfuaded that you possess it in an eminent degree; but if we are not mistaken, you sometimes foar so high above the common rules of logick, that the generality of readers can hardly perceive the whole strength of your arguments. Of this we have given several instances; we shall now produce a few more selected by chance, just as they sell in our way.

wally, Mad his interested necessary its the

Of the Jewish writings.

We believe that our facred writings have been inspired. All sects of Christians look upon them in the same light. Let us see how you reason in consequence of this.

Alludmol approllage Text. vierges the bear

"You must know that all the writings of the Jewish nation were necessary to the world, for how could God inspire useless "writings? And if these writings were necessary

Lafily.

" cessary, how comes it that any of them were lost or corrupted?" (Letter of a Quaker.)

Comment.

have needed bed this start do necessary to

which lpha is that the se

Probably, fir, you thought this an excellent argument, but perhaps fome readers will think otherwise. We confess it, we are of the number.

obliged to think, that all the writings of the Jewish nation were necessary to the world; nobody ever said or thought it before you. How useful it is to read you!

adly, Must writings be necessary to the world to make God inspire them? May he not inspire such as may be useful at certain times and to certain persons? And could you prove, that the lost writings of the Jewish nation have not been useful in the times, and to the persons for whom they were written?

3dly, It appears too, that there is some difference between being useful and being necesfary, between being useful to some persons, and being necessary to the world; and we have reason to believe that he who consounds these terms does not reason very justly. Lastly, Some people will think that you ought to have named those sacred books of the Jews, which you suppose to have been corrupted; for we know none of them that have been corrupted in any important and essential point. Perhaps you do not take this word in the common acceptation. If this be the case, you should inform your readers of it in the new edition.

§ 2.

Of certain refurrections.

Our facred writings speak of some particular resurrections, operated by our prophets; we read of such too in your facred writings; but all these facts, sir, appear very improbable to you; you think you can demonstrate the impossibility of them yourself, and in order to do it you thus reason,

Text.

- "To make a dead man rife again, at the end of some days, it is necessary that all
- " the imperceptible parts of his body, which
- " had been exhaled in the air, and which the
- " winds had carried off, should return to
- " their proper places; that the worms,
- " birds, and animals that have fed on the
- " corpse should restore each what it took "away.

" away. The worms which have fattened " on the entrails of this man have been eat-

" en by fwallows, these swallows have been

" devoured by other birds, and these again by hawks, these hawks again by vultures;

" each of these must restore precisely what belonged to the dead man, otherwise he

" cannot be the same person."

Comment.

What rapidity of imagination, fir! In the space of some days, that is at most of two or three, you see a man dead, and the worms grown fat on his entrails, and these worms eaten by swallows. This is very sudden, but this is not all; you see again these swallows devoured by other birds, these again by hawks, and these again by vultures; all this in so short a time! Truly, this is going on at a great rate, the ordinary process of nature is more flow.

However, as there is nothing utterly impossible in these suppositions, we see no inconvenience in granting them to you.

But, fir, is it absolutely necessary, in order that this man should rise again and be the same person, that all the imperceptible parts of his body, which had been exhaled in the air, should come each into its own place, and that that all the animals, fed with this substance. should restore to it exactly what belonged to it? Does a man cease to be the same person as foon as he loses any of those imperceptible parts which he had before? We think that one might lofe fome very perceptible parts of the body, without ceafing to be the same perfon. Suppose an officer loses an arm or a leg in battle by a cannon-ball; and let this leg or arm be devoured by ravenous beafts, which in their turn shall be devoured by others, does this officer cease to be the same man because he wants a leg or an arm? And when the king rewards him for his bravery, does he bestow the Cross of Saint Lewis on another person?

Let us suppose (which God forbid, as we fincerely love you) that the reading of some bad piece of criticism, ours for instance, should throw you into a fever, and that in confequence of this you should lose some ounces of blood; would you on this account no longer be Mr. de Voltaire? And suppose your blood was cast into some place where it was eaten by worms, then these worms were confumed by fwallows, thefe again by other birds, and these again by hawks, and these again by vultures; would it be necessary, in order to your being the same person, that all these animals should restore to you precisely whatever belonged to you? Ane you so great a phia philosopher, and yet ignorant of this, that what belongs to you is not effentially yourfelf?

But let us not dwell on such dismal suppofitions. You perspire, we suppose; the imperceptible parts of your body are continually exhaled in the air; by this perspiration you may probably lose this day about two pounds of these imperceptible parts. And when you get up to-morrow morning, shall you no longer be Mr. de Voltaire?

Therefore this triumphant argument against the possibility of resurrections, is not very sound; and when you formed it, you had not the principles of Metaphysicks on the identity of persons, present in your mind.

1 101 \$ 3. mili

The understanding of beasts proved by this expression, Their blood shall be upon them.

Text. olui diso any boold

"It is faid in Leviticus, that if a woman "lies with a beaft, she shall be killed with the beaft, and their blood shall be upon them. "This expression, their blood shall be upon them, shews evidently that beafts were then supposed

COMMENTARY. 367

' supposed to have some understanding."
(Treatise of Toleration.)

though their that, sent of the Book

test discrete weds that the control and

tothog far at their Denterogomy was

there is one word too much here, the word, evidently. And indeed, is it not profittuting it, to apply it to such an argument as this? What a distance, sir, between the premisses and the conclusion which you draw! You clear, with one leap, the interval that separates them; but all your readers will not be able to perceive that connexion which you see between them; we think at least that it will not appear evident to them. This word, sir, should not be lavished; you make too frequent use of it.

§ 4.

An extraordinary method of proving that they wrote only upon stone in the time of Moses.

You have absolutely settled it, fir, that in the time of our legislator they wrote only on stone. The falsehood and folly of this opinion do not stop you; you are so strongly attached to it that nothing can undeceive you; you even think that you can make your readers believe it, and in order to prove it, you say,

Text ved or bollough?

(Treatificol 1 olerations) which goods who " It is fo true that they wrote only on " flone then, that the author of the Book " of Joshua says, that Deuteronomy was " written on an altar of unhewed stones co-" vered with mortar. Probably Joshua did " not intend that this book should last long." (Caloyer.) name in me daily of it ylegs of it What a difference of themmod our the providing

and the conclution which you draw! Very

Here is false reasoning, and a filly Joke, sir.

False reasoning, for do you not perceive that it amounts to this? It is faying this plainly, Joshua wrote upon mortar, therefore at that time they wrote only on stone; or Joshua wrote Deuteronomy on stone, therefore he did not intend that this book should last long.

Silly joke; for if there is any humour in it, it is only on supposition that Joshua did write on mortar, and that this mortar was of the fame nature as ours. But if this mortar was a kind of stucco, capable of refisting the injuries of weather, especially in such a climate as that of Palestine, which many learned men have thought; or if this mortar ferved only to cement the stones on which Joshua wrote, as others suppose with good reason, what becomes of your joke? Certainly Certainly, fir, when a man reasons and jests in this manner, he must have a great fund of wit to procure himself readers.

\$ 5.

Of Ninus, the founder of Ninivé.

You have another very extraordinary way of reasoning, sir; you conclude from the termination of a man's name whether he ever existed or not.

Tologhus the hilloriatist test that Alexander

ed by the fewin high-prieft

"There never was a Ninus, founder of "Ninvah, called by us Ninivé, no more "than a Belus, founder of Babylon; no A-"fiatick prince ever had a name in us." (Philosophical Dictionary.)

Comment. violiti to viigibil

Ninvah called by us Ninivé, is certainly a noble stroke of erudition. But what shall we think of this argument; No Asiatick prince ever had a name in us, therefore there was no such person as Ninus, the founder of Ninivé! Is not this just as if a man affirmed that there never was such a person as Pompey, because no Roman general ever had a name ending in y? This might be answered by saying, that there never was a Vol. II. B b

Pompey

Pompey at Rome, but that there lived at Rome a person called Pompeius, whom the English call Pompey. Does this change of termination prevent the existence of that Roman?

This kind of argument is so pleasing to you, you find it so convincing, that you use it with the greatest confidence in various parts of your works.

By this you endeavour to invalidate what Josephus the historian relates, that Alexander was received by the Jewish high-priest.

"I myah called htxaT Whive, no more

"Alexander was received by the high" priest Jaddus, that is supposing there ever
" existed a Jewish priest called Jaddus." (Philosophy of History.)

Minorb called by themmod is certainly a noble Aroke of erachtion in But what Thall

This Jewish priest was not called Jaddus, but Joad or Joiada. But does it follow that the high-priest did not receive Alexander, and that Josephus is a lyar, because this high priest Joad or Joiada is called Jaddus in French and Jaddous in Greek? This is an uncommon way of reasoning.

what ide your areas by haven't. Belanding Ille Stray V Backer & Con at the 180 of an age

Tower of Babel.

Text.

" Almost all the commentators think them-" felves obliged to suppose, that the famous " tower built at Babylon, to observe the hea-" venly bodies, was a fragment of the tower " of Babel, which men wanted to raise up " to heaven. It is not well known what com-" mentators mean by heaven; is it the moon? " Is it the planet Venus? All this is very far " from us."

Comment.

Perhaps, fir, you may fay, that this is rather a joke than a piece of reasoning. But what a wretched joke, and how ill placed! Do you not know that to raise up to heaven. means only to raise very high? It is a common expression in all languages, even in yours. We fay every day, to raise a building up to heaven, mountains which raife their heads (1) to heaven. If any little critick should ask, . B b 2

shoot the meen and the planet Venue?

Thought of the water to all the first the form

e e lort que peffer, cha etait deja place.

Dichonary

⁽¹⁾ These words recal to our minds the following verses of a great poet,

what do you mean by heaven? By raising up to heaven? Is it the planet Venus? All this is very far from us; this would make us laugh certainly, but at whom, and for what?

\$. 7.

Of the word Babel.

Your reasoning is as bad with regard to the word Babel. This word puzzles you.

Text at il novem of

"I know not why it is faid in Genefis, "that Babel fignifies confusion." (Philos. Dictionary.)

Comment.

We are amazed at your doubt, fir. Since you understand the Caldean language, as appears

J'ai vu l'Impie adoré sur la terre;
Pareil au cédre, il portoit dans les cieux
Son front audacieux;
Il sembloit a son gré gouverner le tonnere
Fouloit aux pieds ses ennemis vaincus.
Je n'ai fait que passer, il n'etoit deja plus.

These are certainly good verses, altho' they are imitations of the Hebrew. Does Mr. de Voltaire deem these words unintelligible, il portoit dans les cieux son front audacieux? And would he venture to ask Racine the question about the moon and the planet Venus?

pears by all your works, you might guess that Babel, by an abbreviation, of which there are many examples in all languages, comes from Balbel, a Caldean word, which they say signifies confusion.

To this you prefer another derivation; you derive Babel from the words Ba and Bel. You say,

Text.

" Ba fignifies father in the oriental tongues,
" and Bel fignifies God, Babel fignifies the
" city of God."

Comment.

Ba signifies father, Bel signifies God, therefore Babel signifies the city of God; this, sir, is the general strain of your logick. We think your proper conclusion should have been, therefore Babel signifies father God or father Bel. Thus your derivation is neither very clear nor very agreeable to reason.

\$18. 6 to be med dade say

Of the Pythonissa, and of the word Pythons

Text.

"The Pythonissa of Endor, which raised "the shade of Samuel, is well known. Cer-"tainly " tainly however it is very extraordinary that " this Greek word Python was known by

" the Jews in the time of Saul; many learned men have concluded from hence, that this

" account was not written 'till after the Jews

" had some acquaintance with the Greeks, " after the time of Alexander." (Philos. of

" Hiftory.) .

Comment.

(1) The word Python which is Greek, and Greek of late date, which, so far from being found in the Hebrew text, cannot be found in the Greek septuagint version, which in short cannot be seen any where but in the vulgate; this word was known by the Jews in the time of Saul! Surely nothing can be more

(1) The word Python which is Greek. The Hebrew word which answers to python is Ob, the Greek word of the Septuagint, and of the fathers of the Greek church,

is Engastrimutbos. See Supplement.

The Engastrimuthoi or ventriloqui were a kind of wizards, who pretended to foretel future events in a low voice which seemed to proceed from their bellies or from under the earth; many people have denied the possibility of thus speaking, but some of the learned among the moderns E ugubinus, Cælius Rhodoginus, Oleaster, &c. attest that they have seen men and women engastrimuthoi, and that these persons could answer such questions as were put to them exactly with their bellies; there have been recent instances of this too; the author of the Distingare de Trevoux, (article ventriloque,) says that he knew an officer who spoke with his belly, and who for sport used to alarm his comrades by this practice. Edit,

more wonderful! But who told you, fir, that they knew this word, and what could put fuch an extraordinary thing in your head?

Many learned men have concluded from hence, &c. What, because the word Python, of Greek origin, is found in the vulgate, therefore these learned men conclude, that the Hebrew text, in which it is not to be found, was not written until after the Jews had some acquaintance with the Greeks, after Alexander's time. These are excellent logicians, sir, admirable reasoners! You repeat the same argument in the Treatise on Toleration.

destroiden seigi nuch isted eröbert nog sedt Aigologiand sein e**Text.** mey blood gog redt

"It may be observed again, that it is very extraordinary that the word Python is found in Deuteronomy, a long time before this Greek word could be known by the Hebrews; and agreeably to this it is not in the Hebrew."

Comment,

What do you mean here, fir? What! It is extraordinary, and very extraordinary, that a Greek word, which could not be known by the Hebrews, is not found in the Hebrew! It is extraordinary, that this Greek word, which became Latin by common use, is found

in a Latin translation! No, fir, there is nothing extraordinary in all this, but the extraordinary manner of reasoning.

If we, poor ignorant people, had reasoned thus, how you would have handled us! Happily for us our logick goes step by step; it has not that rapid and transcendant progress which yours has.

You fay somewhere, that poor Rousseau never made a good syllogism. It is certain that (1) the citizen of that little common-wealth which borders on your domain, has not always reasoned justly. But consider, sir, whether you reason better than him, and whether you could venture to meet him syllogistically. You shew contempt for his logick, and indeed he cannot set much value upon yours.

Behold these great teachers of men! What an excellent scholar will be become, who takes these new doctors for preceptors, who are charging one another with never having known the principles of true reasoning!

Dail, y maibhearty

EIGHT-

⁽¹⁾ Citizen of that little common-wealth, &c. By this periphrafis, Mr. de Voltaire denotes the common-wealth of Geneva.

EIGHTEENTH EXTRACT.

Of certain sciences and arts. Sequel. Of the art of casting metals. Examination of an article taken out of les Questions sur l'Encyclopedie.

It feems then, fir, that you have done us the honour of a reading; and whilst you observe a deep and sullen silence with regard to so many other works of the learned, in which Christians of all sects, Quakers, Protestants, Roman Catholicks, &c. have, perhaps in a stronger manner than we have done, attacked your prejudices and your errors, you wouchsafe to answer us.

It is not because our letters have appeared to you more strongly and solidly written, or that we treat in them of more important subjects, or that we present them in a more engaging manner; no, sir, you have not so favourable an idea of our seeble essays; and we are better acquainted with the value of them.

But a parcel of poor wretched Jews, strangers, who scarcely understand your language, have appeared less dangerous adversaries. Such is the nature of philosophical generosity! It spares the formidable

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ble enemy, and attacks the weak one who is likely to yield an eafy triumph.

We feel our inferiority, fir. A strong party, powerful protectors, a brilliant and merited reputation, extent of knowledge, graces of style, &c. all these advantages are on your side, but truth is on our's; in her company, there is always strength, let the adversary be every so powerful. With the considence therefore which truth inspires, we shall now attempt to examine the answer you have honoured us with.

rock to and a south of the magni

Observations on the title of Mr. de Voltaire's answer to two of our letters.

No doubt you intended that your answer should abound in wit; for the very title of it is witty.

"Casting. The art of casting considera"ble figures of gold or brass; answer to a
"man who is of another calling." (Questions fur l Encyclopedie, Art. Fonte.)

Moransh Comment. was sold . out of

This title, fir, abounds in wit, we allow it

verfaries. Such is the nature of

it; but would it not have been more ingenious and more true too, to have faid, the art of casting considerable sigures of about three feet. Answer to a man who is of another calling; by a man who is of that calling.

These expressions, considerable figures, of about three feet, would make a lovely contrast, and would surprize the reader agreeably. And nothing can be truer than these other words, by a man who is of that calling; for certainly you are of it, fir, we see it at once.

§ 2.

A little stratagem of the learned founder.

But fince you are of that calling, fir, fince you are fuch a perfect mafter of the art of casting metals, why have you recourse to these little stratagems which unfair disputants deal in? You begin by changing the state of the question.

Text.

"The question is whether, without the help of a miracle, a figure of gold could be cast in one night."

Comment.

onni orom used ovad ton to bluew tade to

This is not at all the question, fir; neither Exodus relates it, nor have we ever afferted that Aaron cast the golden-calf in one night; consequently this is a false exposition, and a little stratagem.

would friend all the reader arrelations.

In that part of your works which we were confuting, you spoke of one day, and in your answer, you speak of one night. What advantage have you, sir, in changing the day into night? Your affertion will not by this become more true; we have denied it, and we deny it again.

Yes, fir, (you oblige us to affume a style that may be displeasing to you.) Yes, it is false, very false, absolutely false, that Exodus or any other book of scripture says, that Aaron spent but one day or one night in casting the golden calf, nor have we in any place afferted it.

You assumed this point without giving proofs; you answer us without producing any; you can never produce any; we would defy you to do it, if it was decent to defy a man whom we respect.

nedchiefly be a large finite. Now, for afterm never having hid or \$00 ght that the golden

of the Another little Bratagem.

You are not satisfied with changing the state of the question; you bring on another little stratagem. You make us say just the contrary of what we have said.

A noble and liberal serious to defence indeed

" It has been afferted, that nothing is ea" fier than to cast a statue in three days,

" which might eafily be feen by two or three

" millions of fouls."

Comment.

You mean probably, fir, by two or three millions at once, for the smallest statue might be seen by two or three millions successively.

But where have you found that our letter speaks, of a statue that might be easily seen by two or three millions of souls at once? Produce the place, sir, or confess that you knowingly charge us with an absurdity of which we have not been guilty.

A statue, which might easily be seen by two or three millions of souls at a time, must neces-

necessarily be a large statue. Now, so far from ever having faid or thought that the golden calf was a large statue, we told you that one of your mistakes was your representing it to yourself like the groupe in the Place des Victoires, or the Laocoon at Marly. We observed to you, that it was made to be carried at the head of the army, and that a portable statue cannot be a large one. Therefore you make us fay just the contrary of what we have faid. A noble and liberal way of defence indeed! This is a new and convincing proof of that love of truth which guides your pen! e fier than to cast a statue in three days,

which might caldyboleen by two or three

millions of fouls.

False things laid to our charge by him.

You go on with the same candour, and say, You mean probably, fit, by two

millions at once, for . Text nellent flater might se feen by two or three millions plecefficely.

" They have wrote against us and against all ancient and modern sculptors, for want of having confulted the work-houses. The " authority of commentators is put in op-" position to that of artists. Arts are not " to be treated of in this way. In vignimons which we have not been gu

Comment.

A, statue, which might easily be seen by They have wrote against us, &c. Wrote against against you and against all the sculptors, sir! God forbid! we never had such a thought. We have too much respect for you, and esteem for them.

We allow that thro' zeal for your character, and defire of contributing, if possible, to the perfection of your works, we took the liberty of pointing out some mistakes to you into which you had fallen. But, if we are not deceived, this is not writing against you. Attach yourself as closely as you please to your prejudices, false assertions, and errors, we shall always think it our duty to distinguish you from them.

We shall be cautious especially, of ascribing the opinions of such an artist as you are, to all the ancient and modern sculptors. We feel how unjust this proceeding would be, and how unfair with regard to you.

For want of baving confulted the work-houses, &c. We have confulted them, sir, be affured of it. If it was necessary, we could name several of them to you; and we have not put the authority of commentators in opposition to them. Thus the arts are treated. Is this the way you have always treated them?

Tomacol Bailan, in his native country Arona,

against you and a gainst all the sectorers that God sorbid have never bath such as thought

Of certain noble secrets invented by the great artist.

You proceed in your joking way, and you fay comically enough, was to make the same of the

inter with ich was that . But, if we are

"The business of a founder is the only thing in question; it is not needful to confult Artapanus, Berosus, Manetho, to know how a statue should be made, such as may be seen by the whole army of Xerxes in march."

ing the opinions of fitch an artift as you are, to all the ancient attemmod in leulotors. We

You do us too much honour, sir. To you it belongs to consult Artapanus, Berosus, Manetho. These names we read in many parts of your works; they are not to be found in any part of ours. It would indeed be a noble thing to see such ignorant people as we are, quoting Artapanus and Manetho with regard to statues; we are too well acquainted with our own powers and with theirs too.

10 kg leave where against as the

When

nountly.

When we shall wish to be informed of a thing, which is indeed very well worth knowing, how to make a statue which may be seen by an army of a million of men in march, such as that of Xerxes, we will not consult the ancient authors of Egypt and Caldea. We will apply to a writer of later date, and much better instructed in the business of a founder; to you, sir, who are of that calling, and versed in all its secrets.

No, fir, none but fuch a founder as you, and of so lively, fruitful, and poetical an imagination as yours, could be capable of conceiving and executing a statue which could be seen by the army of Xerxes in march.

Truly, sir, this is not an easy job. An army of a million, or even of half a million of men in march, must cover a great piece of ground; and you cannot suppose that every soldier had a telescope in his pocket. Be assured, sir, that without the help of telescopes, it would have been hard for such an army in march to see a statue even of natural size. Certainly, something larger would be necessary in this case, for instance, the Colossus of Arona, mounted perhaps on the Trajan pillar. Now, (1) the Colossus of Arona, incorporated Vol. II.

⁽¹⁾ The Colossus of Arona. It was a great Colossal statue erected in honour of Charles Borromeus, Archbishop of Milan, in his native country Arona. Christ.

with the Trajan pillar, and cast along with it, especially in a single cast, would make indeed a pretty considerable molten statue. ni nem la mailian a la

You certainly know, fir, the proper pro-cels for executing fuch a piece of work; and as your talents for mechanicks are as great as for cafting metals, you also certainly know what the Vaucanions, the Laurents, the Lauriots do not know, by what mechanical invention fuch a statue might be borne at the head of an army. Truly, fir, you are poffeffed of wonderful fecrets! We hope you will not much longer rob the world of them.



Reafons which the illustrious writer alledges, to shew, that it is impossible, without the help of a miracle, in less than six months to cast a golden calf of three feet, coarsely executed.

This is a poor joke! you will fay. Be it fo. Let us fay no more of your army of Xerxes in march, and of our Colossus of Arona. Let us speak only of a statue of three seet; How much time is requifite, to cast a golden calf of three feet, coarsely executed?

Text.

harve ere ded in honori. ". flesh the athnom xie ren-

n marca

California.

themmodilan, in his native country Arona; Chrift.

has brood out Comment, od word and

Six months, fir! this is a great deal. If you had fufficient proof of this, fir, you would oblige us to give up the account in the Pentateuch, or to have recourse to a miracle. Let us now fee what are your proofs.

The first is a description, in twenty articles, of the processes which are now used, for casting large copper-figures.

og invoct shorter points as

"This is the manner of casting a statue " of only three feet. 1st, They make a "model in fuller's earth. 2dly, This model is covered with a mould in plaister, by fitting the pieces of plaister one to another, &c. &c. &c." it to outsit noting a miles

ob now , in som Comment: fartheon wit ned!

We allow that this description (which some artist probably gave you) is, excepting some omissions, pretty exact, and that it may be eafily understood by persons of that calling. As to those who are not of this calling, they had better add to it the words Fonte, in the Encyclopedie, and the Dictionaire des beaux Arts by Lacombe. By the help of these two comments, they may understand some parts, which are not explained with fufficient clear-Cc2

ness for them, beginning at the second and fifth articles, &c. &c.

We allow again, that this method is generally followed now in casting large bronze statues; such for instance, as those in your publick places; and even sometimes when they are casting bronze statues of three seet, of extraordinary elegance, intended as ornaments for the cabinets of rich curiosos.

But is this an ancient method? Does it go back as far as the time of Moses? Are all these processes indispensably necessary? Can none of them be left out? Was it never posfible, and is it not possible now to substitute others in their flead, more quick and expeditious? In short, were there not formerly, and are there not at this day, other methods of casting a golden statue of three feet in less than fix months? These things, sir, you do not prove, and you ought to prove them; without this your learned description is absolutely thrown away. We grant you, that there are processes which may require fix months; but we will deny your affertion if you fay that there are none which will require less time.

To this first proof, not very convincing indeed, you add another; which is the authority of one of your most famous artists,

Text.

Text.

" I asked Mr. Pigal, how much time he " would require to make an horse, only three " feet high, in bronze. He answered me in " writing, I require fix months at least. I

" have this declaration dated 3d June, 1770.

-do of auditing Comment. thirtee that in order to putof

the receduration :

We make no doubt of this, fir, as you affirm it; but what can you conclude from it? Mr. Pigal, a famous artift, opulent and in great business, requires six months at least, to cast in bronze an horse three feet high; therefore an inferior artift would require the fame time! Mr. Pigal, jealous of his reputation, and who wishes to let nothing go out of his hands but master-pieces, would use curious and extraordinary processes in this case: therefore there are not any methods more simple! Mr. Pigal requires fix months at least to cast in bronze a figure of three feet, performed with care, elegance, and that fine finishing which he gives to all his works; therefore the same time is requisite to make a golden figure, coarfely executed ! I do a to

We think, fir, that, without pretending to more knowledge than Mr. Pigal in the art of casting metals, we may pronounce these confequences ill deduced; and that the denying them is not denying truth.

bed required but eight days for \$ 7. Whe-

the Rechiel and

I affect Mr. Pies? they much time he

Whether, and how a golden calf of three feet might be cast, not only in less than fix months, but in a fortnight or even in a week.

Before we proceed farther, permit us to obferve, that in order to justify the account in Exodus, no more is strictly required than the possibility of casting a golden calf in three weeks or a month. For as the scripture has not determined either the time which Aaron took to make the golden calf, or the moment in which the Israelites began to murmur at the absence of their leader; we may suppose that they began to be weary of his absence at the end of ten, fifteen, or twenty days, having been accustomed to see him go up and come down from the mountain every day. Thus Aaron may have had three weeks or even a month, to make the golden calf. Now, there cannot be the least doubt, altho' you feem to entertain one, of the possibility of making a golden calf even of three feet, in three weeks or a month, hardened of trees

But could a golden calf of three feet be cast in a fortnight, or even in a week? We have affirmed that it can be done, and we affirm it again. You fay, Tabout salvenob och al Texts

8 7. 11/he-

may vide dong a de Text de s guol of au svin

"If they had applied to Mr. Pigal or Mr.
" le Moine, they would have changed their
" opinion."

Comment.

They have confulnd fone had founders

We own, fir, we did not apply to Pigal or le Moine. It is not needful to apply to the Phidiases of France, to get a statue made of three feet, coarsely executed.

But, even if we had confulted them, we should not, in all probability, have changed our opinion. If we had mentioned a golden statue, and told them that we wished for dispatch in the execution, rather than high sinishing in the work, these great men would have been (1) kind enough to point out to us inferior artists, who follow an easier method, and use more expeditious processes.

Such artists there are, sir; and there is at this time, a much more expeditious method of casting metals, than that of which you give

⁽¹⁾ Kind enough. This kindness we have experienced. Since the answer with which Mr. de Voltaire has honoured us, we have had an opportunity of consulting Mr. Guyard, that excellent disciple of the immortal Bouchardon, a man born to replace his master. This great artist recommended us to one of his friends, a gold-smith, who required but eight days for this work, Aut.

give us fo long a description. Probably you were not ignorant of it, sir, altho' you would seem so; for you add with an air of triumph,

Text.

but the actor brook housement)

"They have confulted none but founders "of pewter plates, or of other little works, "that are cast in fand."

the Estates of Prance, to get a fietye made

At last, sir, the word escapes you! They cast in sand, yes, sir, they cast in sand, and not only pewter plates and other little works, but also chandeliers, vases, sigures of copper, gold and silver, of one, two, three seet high, and even sometimes higher. Apply, sir, not to founders of pewter plates, but to founders in copper, to such goldsmiths as work for churches, and be assured that, whenever you shall require it, they will cast you in sand an horse of copper, or a calf three seet high and more, in less than six months, and even in less than three weeks, without a miracle.

These are the shops and the artists which we have consulted, and which you ought to have consulted yourself, as you were looking out for the most expeditious process for casting a portable statue; there you might have been

been satisfied by ocular demonstration, just as we were, that the method of casting figures of three seet, which you have described in twenty articles, is not the only one in use, even in your own time; that a more simple operation may be substituted in its place; in short, that it is very possible, without a miracle, to cast a statue of three seet, not only in less than six months, but even in less than a fortnight.

Perhaps you may ask us, where we found the artists, who offered to make us a statue of gold or copper, in a fortnight or even in a week. Where, sir? At Rotterdam, Brussels, Antwerp; at Paris, Rue Guerin-Boisseau, Rue des Arcis, Pont-au Change, Quai des Orsevres, &c. But as we told you before, we promised them the materials, workmen, if they were wanted, and even a model, that is, to those who required but (1) three days for the work. We leave them at liberty to make

⁽¹⁾ Three days. We were informed that the workmen at Paris were not remarkable for executing at the time promised, and that in making a bargain with them it was necessary to bind them up by great forfeitures, if the work was not completely done in the space of time given. We freely own that we did not follow this method with those who required but three days from us, but we were very careful to bind those up who required eight. Aut.

it of one or (1) of several casts, and we told them over and over, that we did not want a statue highly finished, retouched, burnished, &c. &c. and we said, that altho' it should be so ill made, that a man might take the head of a calf for that of an ass, we would be satissied with it.

only in left than fix m. 8. 2 to, but even in loca

mirade, to dail a flatue of thice well that

A sure way for the learned writer to clear up all his doubts with respect to this matter.

Have you still any doubts, sir? The following is an easy method of satisfying them. Deposit in the hands of a notary one hundred marks of bar-gold, and one hundred thousand livres in money; enter into a publick engagement, properly drawn up, to give this whole sum to that founder, who in the shortest time shall cast such a figure as we have described.

If

than a formisht

(1) Of feveral casts. Pliny the elder observes, that the Fgyptian artists were so skilful in proportions, that the different parts of a statue were distributed to different workmen, who executed them separately. It was sufficient to know the height of the statue, to make all the limbs in due proportion. Then the only business was to put them together, and it is well known that soldering in gold and silver is easier than in brass. Perhaps the workmen Aaron employed were not so skilful, but might they not sollow this method, and form their statue by several casts? Aut.

If no artist can be found capable of executing this in eight days, we promise to make a public retractation and confession of our ignorance.

As you are fure that a golden calf of three feet, cannot be cast in less than fix months, you run no risk; and if you did run any risk, what are an hundred marks of gold, and one hundred thousand livres to a rich man and a philosopher?

Enter into this agreement then, fir. You will not pay too high for the triple fatisfaction of informing yourfelf, instructing the world, and bringing us to confusion. If you refuse to come into it, we shall suppose you sufficiently answered, and we shall think ourselves dispensed from giving you any answer hereafter, let you say what you will on the art of casting metals.

The relocal gold in a passe with mercury is the second to the second response in the great heat inquery for second to the second in the second

Comment.

Allegation and the second

-BNIN . by edigace, and de Ponte.)

If as will can be thund capable of

NINETEENTH EXTRACT.

Of some sciences and arts. Sequel. Of chymistry. Examination of an article taken out of the Questions sur l'Encyclopedie.

you run no rile; and if you did run any riling what are an hundred by the of gold, and one

Some learned processes, &c. known to the learned chymist.

We think, fir, that we have answered you very fully on the art of casting metals. Shall we be able to make as good a defence with respect to chymistry?

Here especially, you shew all the depth and extent of your knowledge. Must we not form the highest ideas of it when we read what follows?

Text.

"I reduced gold into paste with mercury.

"I dissolved it with aqua regia... I never

"could calcine it... The great heat lique
"fies gold, but does not calcine it. (Questions Encyclopediques, article Fonte.)

Later Court State

Comment,

Jon enw noisson Comment of tres don't

You are acquainted with these learned proceffes! You have made these curious experiments, these sublime and uncommon discoveries! What a mighty chymist you are! O Stahl, Beker, Geoffroi, Lemeri, Lavoisier, Baumé, Cadet, chymists of this nation, foreign chymists, bow your heads, acknowledge your mafter. He reduces gold into paste with mercury, and he diffolves it with aqua regia, &c. O the wonderful fecrets! What an honour it is to us, that this profound chymift can produce nothing against us except the petty processes of quacks!

.15 2.

He changes the state of the question again.

Yes, fir, you attack us with regard to chymistry, by changing again the state of

and in order to get rid of it, you equally "The question was whether a golden " figure, cast in a fingle night, can, without " a miracle, be reduced into powder next "eday." we were then and vabe may to early Comment. It and the

western which we called the property

Next day. Is it precisely next day? In a

fingle day? No, fir, the question was not whether a statue of gold can be reduced into powder in a single day. We defy you to produce any passage in our sacred writings that says this, or any place in which we have afferted that Moses reduced the golden cals into powder in a single day. What shall we never have truth? Simulation who we have assessed to work the golden cals as the same as

your mafter. He rectard gold into pafte with

"The question was whether it was possis ble to reduce a golden figure into powder by casting it into the fire. This was pre"cisely the question." Dup to casting uting

refree to thy Comment.

This was not the question at all. You had afferted, that the most learned chymistry could not reduce gold into potable powder. This is a general affertion without exceptions; and we denied it, because it was false in general. At length you perceive the mistake, and in order to get rid of it, you cunningly add these words, by casting it into the fire.

But these words are not to be found either in the note which we were then answering, nor in three or four other places of your writings which were then before us.

Vext day, Is it preciely next day? In a

dingle

To fay now that the question was whether a golden figure can be reduced into powder in one day, by casting it into the fire, is evidently changing the state of the question. This is a poor stratagem which you should have left to those vain weak men, who, when they find themselves mistaken, have not fortitude enough to own it.

No he, we have not froke of burning or

He makes us fay what we have not faid. to of our letters

You continue to make defence in chymiftry, as you did before, on the art of casting metals.

change, sake the control the other, and thus reasound ideas to beterogeneous

" They pretend that the reduction of gold " into potable powder by burning it, is the " most easy and common operation of chy-" hinty we wildnit it to you we vithin benoutable. You. memmon cowhat pecvillely,

They pretend. Great man, you have not lied, but you have faid the (1) thing that is not. No, we do not pretend this. " colones gold in the fire, he is foling with

We have pretended and do still pretend, that the reduction of gold into powder, to confribe with regard to potable gold.

(i) Thing that is not. See the Quaker's Letter. Edit.

fuch a degree as to render it potable, is a very easy and common operation in chymistry. But we did not say any where that this was to be done by calcining it.

They pretend. And in order to prove this, you quote a long passage out of our letters, in which we do not pretend it. The proof is excellent!

No, sir, we have not spoke of burning or calcining gold, either in this passage, or in any other part of our letters. Indeed the word fusion may be found there, but fusion is not calcination. Gold comes to a state of susson, but not of calcination. Did you, O learned chymist, take the one for the other, and thus consound ideas so heterogeneous?

You answer us merely by making us say what we have not said. This proceeding is artful; but we submit it to you whether it is honourable. You add somewhat peevishly,

Text.

"If any one has told you that Mr. Rouelle "calcines gold in the fire, he is joking with you, or he has told you a foolish thing, "which you ought not to repeat, no more than all the rest of that nonsense which you transcribe with regard to potable gold.

Comment.

COMMENTARY. 401

Comment.

If any one has told you, &c. We have not been told, nor did we tell you, that Mr. Rouelle calcines gold in the fire.

When you make us fay and repeat this nonfense, you calumniate us, fir, and you trifle a little too openly with your readers.

We think too, that what we transcribed with respect to potable gold, was not non-fense. We transcribed the precepts of Stahl and Senae, who were not fools, and never wrote nonsense.

What, fir, can you not answer us any way but by calling all the chymists in the world fools! Do you not see that our cause will soon become theirs?

a pretended to cificis but, a real poison. But

give the receipt, the pota

Mr. de Voltaire's potable gold.

We mentioned to you the potable gold of the chymists; and you object to us the potable gold of the quacks. You give a receipt for it. So deep a chymist are you, that this latter is the only potable gold you are acquainted with in chymistry!

VOL. II.

Dd

Text.

Text.

"Potable gold is a piece of quackery; a mountebank trick to deceive people. Those who sell their potable gold to fools do not put two grains of gold into their liquor; or if they put a little into it, they have dissolved it in aqua regia, and they swear to you-that it is potable gold without acid. They strip the gold, as much as possible, of its aqua regia; they load it with oil of rosemary. These preparations are very dangerous; real poisons, and those who sell them deserve correction."

Comment.

but not of teleproperty. The

Potable gold is a piece of quackery, &c. Yes, fir, that kind of potable gold of which you give the receipt, the potable gold of quacks, a pretended specifick but a real poison. But the potable gold of which we spoke to you is no quackery, fir, it is neither a poison nor a specifick.

And yet you address us in these words,

Text.

"Such is your potable gold, of which you "fpeak rather rashly, as you do of every "thing else."

Comment.

Comment.

No, fir, this is not our potable gold, it is yours, it is the potable gold of mountebanks. Ours is that of Stahl, of Senac, and of all the chymists; and we have not spoke rashly of it, nor of any thing else.

that at bringhone powder.

Potable gold of the chymists.

It feems then, fir, that altho' you are acquainted with the potable gold of mountebanks, you have not an idea of that of chymists. We had however given you the process of it. As you have not attended to it, probably because we delivered it in a few words, we shall now lay it before you at full length, such as we read it in Senac's chymistry.

"In order to render gold potable, fays this "learned physician, Moses could not use sim"ple calcination, nor amalgamation, nor ce"mentation. But Mr. Stahl has removed all
"the difficulties that can be made on this sub"ject. The method which he thinks Moses
"used, is very simple; this is it.

"Stabl's potable gold. Take three parts of "falt of tartar, and two of falt-petre, which "dissolve in the crucible; throw in one part D d 2 of

"of gold, it will dissolve in it perfectly. After the fusion take the substance from the fire, you will find an hepar sulphuris, which will pulverize; put this hepar sulphuris into water, it will easily dissolve in it, filtrate the water, it will be red and loaded with gold. This forms a potable gold of a disagreeable taste, very like that of brimstone powder."

Mr. Groffe, of the Academy of Sciences, expresses himself nearly in the same terms, in his Memoire, given in 1733.

"The process, he says, pointed out by Mr.
"Stahl, is to make an hepar with sulphur and
"a fixed alkali. When this hepar is in sussion
"at the fire, if gold be thrown into it, it di"vides it so, and retains it so strongly, that
"when this mixture is dissolved by water, the
"gold passes with the solution of the hepar
"thro' the filtrating paper."

What think you of this, fir? Is not gold, which passes thro a filtrating paper, reduced into parts small enough to be swallowed?

Such is the potable gold of chymists; and such is ours; you see that aqua regia and oil of rosemary are not ingredients in it, as they are in that of the mountebanks. Do you still think that we have spoke of it rashly? And do you think, that after quoting Senac

Senac, as we did, we could fay or believe that chymistry renders gold potable by calcining it?

being and another & ording a who

Of the late Mr. Rouelle, and of the respect he had for Mr. de Voltaires chymistry.

A propos with regard to your chymistry, we had quoted Mr. Rouelle, whom your academy of sciences has since lost. You do us the honour of mentioning this passage from our edition of 1769, at Laurence Prault's, you say, with approbation and privilege; but in mentioning it you indulge yourself in two little pieces of art.

You add some words to it which we had expunged out of this edition, lest they should offend you, and you retrench from it some flattering expressions which we had inserted with respect to you. Probably both these things are done thro' modesty.

But prithee, fir, when you quote us next time, lefs modesty and more truth! But more especially, fir, we beseech you not to make us say what we have not said, and even the contrary of what we have said.

the told gold.

Let us return to Mr. Rouelle,

However

Palethint of talking th

Sonar, as we did, we txeT lay or believe that

" There was a Mr. Rouelle, a learned " chymist and apothecary to the king, who " went with an officer of the revenue in " 1753, to Colmar, where I have a small " estate. He was coming to try an " earth, which a chymist of deux Ponts " proposed to change into falt-petre. I told " Mr. Rouelle that he would make no falt-" petre; he asked me why? Because says I, " I do not believe in transmutations; I think " there can be none; God has made all things, " and men can only affemble and divide."

Comment.

You have a small estate at Colmar. We rejoice at it, fir; you never will have fo great a fortune as we wish you. We are informed that benevolence and generofity chiefly direct the disposal of it; we gladly take this opportunity of giving you deserved praise. May all the rich employ their stores as you do, in relieving the indigent, and making men happy.

You do not believe in transmutators. You are right; many people have repented their too great faith in them. Much money is spent with them without any certainty of making gold; you act wifely in not trufting them with your gold.

However,

However, we can scarcely think that the transmutators will be knocked down by the little argument you propose against them. They may grant you, that God has made every thing, and yet answer you that in their transmutations they do not pretend to create, but only to assemble and divide; that no transmutator proposes to make the substance, but to change the arrangement and configuration of the parts; which is not strictly making.

We doubt besides whether Mr. Rouelle, whom you call a learned chymist, and who is really so, wanted any of your lessons; and that you were under a necessity of proving to him that he could not make salt-petre.

However, the Mr. Rouelle whom we quote, is not the one of whom you fpeak, but his elder brother, Mr. Rouelle of the Academy of Sciences.

Text.

"I cannot tell whether Mr. Rouelle puts himself in a passion, when a man happens to differ from him in opinion."

Comment.

Mr. Rouelle, sir, was an enthusiast in chymistry; false reasonings on this science fretted

ted him, they fay, in a very fingular, and fometimes comical manner.

This small failing was compensated by some excellent qualities. Some allowances must be made to great men, sir. This is a maxim with us; and it cannot be displeasing to you.

When, in order to fret him, your authority was put in opposition to his; Mr. de Voltaire, he would answer with fire, Mr. de Voltaire is a fine speaker, but with all his fine speeches he speaks very incorrectly, when he attempts to speak of chymistry. Mr. Rouelle's friends will know him again by these expressions; they will know him again still better when we add, that at the time he said this, and before he had done, he sat down and got up again five or six times, and that his chair was removed out of its place so many times.

However, Mr. Rouelle was a man of taste. In you, sir, he could distinguish the poet from the chymist; altho' he did not admire you in the latter character, yet he loved you in the former. You conclude by saying to us,

Text.

"If Mr. Rouelle is angry with me; if you are angry, I am forry for it, both on "your

" your account and his; but I do not think him so passionate a man as you say."

Comment.

If Mr. Rouelle is angry with me, &c. He was fometimes angry with your chymistry, fir; but he was not angry with you; and the style in which we answer you, is not an angry tone; therefore you need not be forry.

I do not think him so passionate, &c. Alas, sir, Mr. Rouelle is dead, this is the only subject of our forrows! Let his ashes rest in peace, and let us cast nothing but flowers on his grave.

We shall only observe that our letters appeared before his death, and we have not heard that he disliked them.

We shall now sum up in a few words what we have said of your chymistry.

No. dr. it as not

You had afferted, without limitation, that the utmost efforts of chymistry could not reduce gold into potable powder. Since the publication of our letters, you perceived your mistake; nothing was easier than to confess it. Next to the glory of never falling into an error, the highest degree of honour in a good man is to confess his error.

Instead

Instead of making this noble confession, you have chosen to maintain a falsehood; and in order to vindicate your former opinion, you have altered its nature; you have added words to it which were not in it; you have changed the state of the question; you make us say what we have not said, &c. Truly, sir, this manner of defence will not appear very convincing.

This is not all; you quarrel with us about our gold reduced into potable powder. In vain have we quoted Stahl, Senac, le Fevre, the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences, and all the chymists; you will allow no other potable gold but that of mountebanks. Were we wrong when we faid with Mr. Rouelle, that chymistry was not your talent?

No, fir, it is not, confess it. You went into the laboratories of the chymists to look for weapons, and you lost your way among the crucibles and chymical vessels.

Von led 2000 fed to debott distribution led to V see at an all street of capacity conditions of the case gold free postable powerfer. Side of the publication of our letters the reverse wed vour

an error, the highest descented holicul, in a

berhald

TWENTIETH

TWENTIETH EXTRACT.

Of certain arts and sciences. Sequel. Of writing engraved on stone. Of the Presbyterians, of Fairfax and Cromwell; and of the Village of Naseby, &c. &c. Examination of an article taken out of the Questions sur l'Encyclopedie.

wrote our flone and pometal; fometimes that they wrote on hone duies and wood

Of writing engraved on stone.

You return again to this subject, sir, unexpectedly. This is at least the twelfth time that you have spoke of it; perhaps it may be the last. Let us see then, for the last time, what you have to say on it. You address us in these polite words,

Text.

"You are as bad judges of writing as of metal." (Quest. Encyclop. Art. Fonte.)

-101 ton aid teld Comment. Ect press roll

Might we not answer you, that you are as good a judge of writing as of metal?

Text. Let belote his the difference

be Onestion Civil

Text. O A T X A Text. O LT / O W T

" It had been faid that the ancients wrote on nothing but stone, brick, and wood."

Comment.

You have faid sometimes that they wrote on nothing but stone; sometimes that they wrote on stone and on metal; sometimes that they wrote on stone, brick and wood. Prithee, sir, be so good as to tell us, once for all, what is really your hypothesis.

omis will awa only fin Text. is sul' Proviborooms

"You forget the wood, and you make many weak objections to stone."

in these polite words,

We forget wood! So far from forgetting it, that we have mentioned it eight times, and have implied it so many times by &c. in one letter. How often must a person mention a thing, to shew you that it is not forgotten?

As to our difficulties with regard to stone, we did expect that you would not find them very good. But behold, sir, the difference

of tastes! Many people of some learning have not found them weak.

And if they are weak why do you not anfwer them? This would make it an easier task. But it seems you will not do it. They are not worth the trouble! We understand Of the Properties Text. Minter, Gronwell

" But above all you forget that Deutero-"nomy was written on mortar."

orodivindale M. Jo Comment! And being the law -uodawbre bus barbared witewoods brook wedt

ame of Faufax and Cromwell &c.

We do not forget, that in the note which we were answering, there was no mention at all of Deuteronomy's being written on mortar. You had not yet made this curious and learned observation. Could we foresee that you would one day make it? Therefore you charge us with not having answered a difficulty which (1) you did not propose.

he bronded said that viboused freep could not lobbil in a cot tresi rient icogue fount on

sand that the inhabitants were not permitted.

There is a little mistake here, and par-"don me for faying it, a little dishonesty."

that a group may fav of all country, of which side tod ei si that saimil add ton Comment.

leagues fourie; and that this country of eight

⁽¹⁾ You did not propose. We have fince answered it, · fee page 368.

of taftes! Many people of force learning have not found that memos

There is certainly a little of both; but it is easy to see on which side it lies.

are not worth the try le! We underland

Of the Presbyterians, of Fairfax, Cromwell, &c. &c.

count But above all you forget that Deuteric-

What shall we say, sir, of the Presbyterians, of Fairfax and Cromwell, &c. Of their victory, and of the village of Naseby, where they found above six hundred and sixty thousand sheep, seventy two thousand oxen, thirty-two thousand little girls, which were not all little girls! Shall we answer here this ingenious and sharp allusion in the same and the same allusion in the same and the same allusion in the same and the same allusion in the same all

No! When you shall have proved and clearly proved, that these six hundred thoufand sheep were found in a village; that
six hundred and sixty thousand sheep could
not subsist in a country eight leagues square,
and that the inhabitants were not permitted
to graze their cattle in the neighbouring deferts; but especially when you have proved
that a man may say of a country, of which
he knows not the limits, that it is but eight
leagues square; and that this country of eight
leagues square, bounded by a rivulet on the
south.

fouth, extends to the fouth, beyond that rivulet fifty leagues. When I fay all these things are proved, which no doubt will be very easy, we shall endeavour to answer you.

We had already dwelt perhaps too much on this subject; we shall not touch it again; and we are forry to perceive, that contrary to our intention, our reflexions have chagrined you. You tell us with sincerity,

Text.

"You are so much attached to the English Presbyterians, that you push party spirit "so far, as to be angry with sensible people,

" who think these accounts a little exagge-" rated, and suspect some errors in the co-

" pier."

Comment.

You are so attached to the Presbyterians, &c. And you who are so tolerant, sir, so humane, so gentle; why do you shew so much hatred and antipathy against the Presbyterians!

So far as to be angry. We were not angry; we spoke in the most gentle and moderate manner possible. You are the only man, sir, that has found passion and party spirit in our letters.

Wbo

Who suspect some errors in the copier. We readily acknowledge the faults of copiers, as has appeared, when they are proved; but we do not see that you have clearly shewn the necessity of admitting any in the passage before us.

on this fubject; we that not touch it again; and we are forry teep recive, that contrary

Judgment passed on our letters by the illustrious writer.

Our letters, sir, have not had the happiness of pleasing you. In vain have we assumed the gentlest style; in vain have we tempered every where the mildest criticism with the most flattering encomiums! You have pronounced them impudent, uncivil, adapted only to criticks without taste.

Such as these letters are however, you do not think us able to have wrote them. Whether in joke or earnest, you suppose that some one has held the pen for us; and you grow angry with this our writer, and say hastily,

Text.

"I shall never request him to be my se-

Comment.

not only (1) moderation, but civility and politeries. The what trammod has it happened,

Truly, fir, this is a great punishment But upon the whole, you had better not request this favour from him; as he loves truth, and you hate contradiction, it would be hard for you to agree well together.

To Your redship for Text. I be differented to

"For he makes his masters speak like very signorant men." "was of war to be and of the selection of the sele

We have ante Comment. Weshow moved

without asy trilling fal

Altho you are not latisfied, fir, with the manner in which he makes us speak, yet we think that we have no reason to complain of it; it appears that our letters have met with some success. Some of the learned who love you, and whose approbation is therefore more precious to us, have not scrupled to say that the sewish authors are not deficient in wit or learning; that good observations may be found in them, and (1) researches into antiquity, &c. And others have found in them, (what flatters us much more) wor. Il.

Encyclopedique année 1769, Aut.

not only (1) moderation, but civility and politeness. By what fatality has it happened, fir, that you have feen in them precifely the Cruly died this is a great putigrathe

But upon the whole traff had better not re-

quest this favour from him; as he loves d's If I was not the most tolerant of men, " I would tell you that you are the most im-" pudent and uncivil men in the world." in the the the Amount

Comment. " For he makes his mafters focak like very

O the most tolerant of men! Your toleration is well known, it displays itself in every page

I would tell you, &c. You have faid fo many obliging things to fo many civil chriftians, perhaps you are tempted to fay fomer thing very tender to a parcel of poor dews of met with some success. Some of the learned

The most impudent men. Truly, to have dared to tell Mro de Voltaire, that he was da little mistaken with regard to the Madianites and their country, &c. &c. this was a very impudent thing; and to prove it too, was a refearches into antiquity, & lonid livions lyrey found in them, (what flatters us thuch more

on the second box to M no But

⁽¹⁾ Moderation. See le Mercure, les fournaux des beaux Arts, de Verdun, des Savans, the Monthly Review, &c. Aut.

But knowingly to impute abfurdities to one's adversaries, which they never said, to talk of them as of people hurried on by the Spirit of party, as most ignorant passionate people, this is the very fummit of civility! cold mixes of the eighter of century there

a le aled ed the Text. and ed a ode ode una el

miraele, call a colden cale confiely excepted.

"You forget in what age you are writing. "Your trifling fatire will be difregarded by "genteel people of some learning." figures in sullion places, with who believe

notation of the Comment.

in by this vain paradel A . . 's ho see up tot u

We have answered your trifling criticisms, without any trifling fatire; nothing is more distant from our views and character than fatire of most most labour of the bloom to

thet diversidal process which the dailor

Genteel people of some learning have, you know, honoured our letters with their approbation; and you probably had not a very low opinion of them, fince you deigned to anfwer them affected the beginning or wal agent

castishat for were a patient of capnibals; and

We forget in what age we write! And do you not forget it yourself more than any body, you, who, in the eighteenth century, would make your cotemporaries believe, that in Moses's time, the records of the cities of Phenicia, the accounts of their merchants, the books of their writers, &c. those of Sanvidido H E e 2 choniatho. choniatho, of Job, of Thaut, &c. were written on stone, probably for the convenience of the readers, and the facility of carriage? You, who believe yourfelf an artist, and who pretend that amongst all the founders and goldsmiths of the eighteenth century, there is not one who can without the help of a miracle, cast a golden calf coarsely executed, in less than fix months; you who in order to prove it, state the processes which are used when masterpieces are cast, such as the statues in publick places; and who believe your cotemporaries weak enough to be taken in by this vain parade? You who fet up for a chymist, and in 1771, know no other potable gold but that of mountebanks; who, in 1771, fo many years after Stahl, know not, or would wish to conceal from your readers, that chymical process which he discovered, and which no chymist or learner in chymistry is ignorant of? You who say, and repeat a thousand times in 1771, that the Jews offered human victims to God; that their law commanded these detestable facrifices; that they were a nation of cannibals; and that their prophets promised them as a feast, that they should eat the flesh of horse and of man? &c. office dinestri makes your cotemporaries believed that an

If you are writing all these fine things, sir, for the age you live in, what an idea must you have of it!

Probably

Probably you faid to yourfelf, when you took up the pen, what a (1) celebrated writer did not fay, altho' you charge him with it, "My cotemporaries are ignorant foolish peo-" ple, my reputation and my decifive tone will " awe them; they are trifling, light, unthink-"ing people, who take bons mots for argu-" ments, and flourishes for proofs; I will make " them laugh and they will believe me." This undoubtedly was the class of readers, whom you thought your answer would fuit. For them was calculated that ingenious, elegant, agreeable play of words, which you discharge against (2) a periodical writer, who has deigned to give a favourable account of our letters, as if he was the only one who spoke well of them; therefore you do not know that out of all your periodical writers, there is not one who has not spoke favourably of them. Really, one would think that you read nothing but l'Année literaire, not a passage of it escapes

(1) A celebrated writer. See Evangile du jour. These very words nearly are put into the learned Abbé Fleuri's mouth, a writer as respectable for his sincerity as for his wise and sound philosophy. They make him lay it down as a principle, that his countrymen are sools, who can bear any thing to be said to them. Aut.

(2) A periodical writer. The infult offered to the author of Année literaire on our account, causes an increase of our gratitude towards him, and towards all those periodical writers, who have given a favourable account of our letters. We plainly see the danger they run, who speak freely of those writings in which Mr. de Voltaire and his works are mentioned. Aut.

you! You treat this journal as you do the Jews; you profess the highest contempt for it every where, and yet you are continually returning to it. People do not generally speak so much of what they despise.

We have not the honour of knowing the author of l'Année literaire, but we read his works, fir, as you do; and we will loudly affirm, that a man like him, who has contended for fo many years against the double torrent of impiety and false taste, is an useful member of fociety. In who wild add adds againth (2) a periodical writer, who has deagh-

ed to give a favourable a count of our letters, as if he was the only one wild spoke well of

A piece of advice given and returned.

You conclude, fir, by giving us a piece of advice, which we will take the liberty of returning to you salled a lon andown Lugy

Text.

" Believe me, lay aside your ancient com-" mentators, and don't infult christians." wife and lound attilotophy. They make him lavit depte

Comment. and that selecting as

1) A period cal writer. The infult offered to the au-Lay afide your ancient commentators. Why lay them aside, if they may be useful?

plainly fee the danger, they run, whis

tinodeely of those writings in which Mr. de Voltaire and his works are mentioned. Aut. Don't infult Christians. You fuddenly take up the Christian cause with great warmth! Indeed, sir, you may be answered without insulting christians, or even a single christian. It is not insulting a writer, modestly and respectfully to point out his mistakes.

Don't infult christians. This is good advice; but to whom are you giving it? To Jews, who are continually employed in clearing the scriptures, on which the faith of christians is built, from your invectives? Give this advice, fir, to the author des Homilies sur l'ancien & le nouveau Testament, to the author des Questions de Zapata, to the author du Diner du Comte de Boulainvilliers, to the author of the Philosophical Dictionary, of the Epistle to the Romans, of l'Evangile du jour, to these writers you should give in charge not to insult christians.

Don't infult Christians. What fund for a large and bitter comment, would these words and (1) these writings supply us with, if we were malicious! But here we stop; do you judge whether we love satire.

encinelle prov hadrielas encinella Believe

on tell mail or the bostoneous

called Fanaticks, perfecutors, rogues, dupes, impostors; they are told that they and their Gospel are liars, that they have told lies, ridiculous lies with their miracles. Edit.

Believe me, lay afide, &c. Believe us, fir, lay afide your chymistry, (we told you so before,) and the art of casting metals, and the art of writing on stone, But above all, lay aside the Hebrews, their language, their laws, their history, &c. or when you speak of them hereafter, do it with more exactness and impartiality.

CONCLUSION.

What has has been our object, fir, in all these observations? Was it to humble Mr. de Voltaire, and to enjoy an infolent triumph over a great man? Far be from us fuch thoughts! We have been attacked and abused in our patriarchs, our kings, and prophets, our laws and manners, &c. and we thought, that we might juftly defend ourselves; that we might instruct those who are dazzled with your style and fallies of wit; that we might convince them, chiefly in this case of the Jews, that they must examine before they believe; that altho' you are a great man and. a great philosopher, yet you have your abfences of mind, your prejudices and errors; that your quotations are fometimes false, your translations unfaithful, your affertions rash, your decisions unfair; in short, that he who would rest his faith on your word, or take you for a fure and infallible guide, as not be red tall blot many

many_credulous readers have done, would necessarily expose himself to many mistakes.

Upon the whole, fir, we think it our duty to make this publick declaration before we conclude; the multitude of mistakes, contradictions, and bad arguments, which we have pointed out in your writings, and so many more which might be pointed out, shall never diminish our esteem for your perfonal qualities, or our admiration for your talents. Notwithstanding the bitterness of your answer and the sharpness of our reply; these shall never take any thing from the sincerity of our encomiums, or the servour of our good wishes for your welfare.

We affirm it with fatisfaction; no writer of this age has run fo splendid a carreer as you have done. Enjoy the glory you have acquired; rule over the empire of letters by your talents, and over the country you inhabit by your benevolence. Let your eftate continue to be an asylum to the (1) unfortunate; there cherish (2) discontented industry,

(1) The unfortunate. Mademoiselle Corneille, the Calases, Sirven, and many others.

⁽²⁾ Discontented industry. Several artificers of Geneva were received by Mr. de Voltaire and set up on his credit.

dustry, encourage population, give life (1) to agriculture. Let French veffels (2) fail freely on the lake, and be indebted for this to your cares and fortune. Raise statues to your king, and temples to your God. And fince thro' a bleffing, which few writers have experienced, the icy hand of age has not yet extinguished the fire of genius, consecrate your last labours to an useful and honourable purpose, to that of overturning the pernicious and foolish (3) systems of your sophists; o assumption

(1) To agriculture. See the illustrious writer's letters to the bishop of Annéci, Mr. de Voltaire has been charged with making too great a parade of his acts of beneficence and generofity. This is an unfair charge. A great man who has enemies, has a right to publish the good which he does. Happy that age in which all the rich will do good and will tell it too! Aut. and to

(2) Sail freely on the lake. The first French frigate that was feen on the lake of Geneva was feized for debt. Mr. de Voltaire gave thirty thousand livres to clear it.

See les Ephemerides du Citoyen. Aut.

(3) Systems of your sophists. Altho' Mr. de Voltaire who has confuted the System of nature, Questions Encyclopediques,) invites people to read it, (Questions Encyclopediques,) we have not read it, and we do not repent it. Some learned christians assure us, that it is a work both abfurd and tiresome, in which the author, wandering in the mifts of his vain metaphylicks, is perpetually contradicting himself. And yet learned men have extolled this work, people of all stations have read it with avidity. Even women have dipt into it! O France! What age! What taffe!

However the infatuation of the publick has been but short. This work Mr. de Voltaire says very justly, is fallen

despise their secret murmurs, and endeavour to wipe off that shameful stain which they have east on philosophy. Establish in opposition to these bold writers, the existence of a God, his justice, his providence, &c. these truths which are engraved on every heart, which are dear to every nation, the only folid basis of civil society, which with sacrilegious impudence they endeavour to overturn; Teach citizens to obey the laws, give to legiflators leffons of humanity, and to fovereigns precepts of wife toleration. But whilst you are preaching up toleration, exclude not men from it, who worship the same God you do, who are your brethren by nature, your fathers in the faith, a people who deserve to

fallen of itself. This is a convincing proof, that its transient success was rather owing to the intrigues of party, than to its pretended graces of style. Therefore it could not rested shame either on the age or the nation. Disgrace could fall only on the author, and on the wretched party that supported him. And even among this small flock, no one owns the birth. They are all ashamed of it. Christ.

(1) The only solid basis of civil society. On this basis the Roman orator sounded his common-wealth and his laws. "Let our citizens, says he, begin by firmly besolid lieving that there are gods, masters of all, who govern all... whose looks discover what every one is, and what he does." Sit igitur jam boc a principio persuasum civibus dominos esse omnium rerum & moderatores Deos...

Et qualis quisque sit, quid agat, qui din se admittat, intueri. This was the opinion of Socrates, Plato, Zaleucus, and of all the ancient legislators. What a difference between these great men and our little giants! Aut.

be pitied on account of their misfortunes. and if we dare fay it, to be respected on account of their antiquity, religion and laws. tion to the conference of the waters to the way

two to be delivered the We are, and always shall be, with the higheff effeem and the most profound respect,

imputenced they it codicavoure to evertime

Gode his judice, his providence,

Teach citizens to obey the laws, owned Sir, your most obedient humble servants,

precents of wife toleration. But withit you are preaching up werefron, se clude not men

1A, Nov. 1771.

from it, who working the fame God god do. From the environs of Yoleph Ben Yonathan! of Utrecht, Aaron Mathatai, 21011 David Wincker.

fallen of ithis is a convincing proof that in transferit specess was rather example to the advising of party, than to its pretended grades of fivle. "Therefore it could not reflect that he either on the age or the nations Difgrace could fall only on the author, and on the wretched party that supported him. And even augong this finall flock; no one owns the birth. They we all ashamed of it. CLEAR I N I A

(x) The only folid helf of civil feriety. On this hafer the Roman orate with the United Common-weathn and his laws, die Roman orate with each his laws, die Let obscitizens, lays he, begin by froncy begin in leving that the continue of all, who even when all or whole looks what every one in acceptance and " ntache does." Sie igten jandee a principio per infante cirobus dominer elle american verien Estanderatores Dech.... It quality quifque fit, quid agot, and alle je admittel findwerf. This was the opinion of Sorrates, Plato, Zalencus, and of all the ancient legiflators. What a difference between thefergreat men and our little giants! Aur.